



# irregular

Summer Issue 2021

magazine

Warhammer +

Brutality Skirmish

Banana Wars  
TV Round-Up

Painting Moderns  
Balm Monster

*Plus Blast from the Past, Reviews, and much, much more*





## Cover Art; Mark Frost

(<https://pixabay.com/users/blackdog1966-8141061/>)

## 4 Editorial

A round up of the latest happenings in the gaming world

## 5 News

A round up of the latest happenings in the gaming world

## 14 Ed's Challenge

Our editor continues painting his grey army.

## 18 Warhammer Plus

A quick look at the big news from Games Workshop

## 22 Painting Axis Troops

Review of the new painting book by Andy Singleton

## 23 Brutality Skirmish Game

A look at the new game by Scott Wainwright

## 27 Rise of the Tang Dynasty

A book review

## 28 TV Viewing Selection

A quick look at some global TV shows for gaming inspiration

## 33 TankCraft Series

A couple of book reviews

## 35 Banana Wars

US intervention in Central and South America

## 38 1972 Easter Offensive

A review of the book North Vietnam's 1972 Offensive

## 39 A doll in the Tank Museum

A look at the new exhibition at the Tank Museum

## 41 Balm Monster

A short story set in the world of Brutality

## 44 Napoleonic War

Reviews of books on the Napoleonic Campaign





## 48 Balkans Conflicts

A review of the book looking at conflicts in the Balk

## 49 Painting Moderns

The editor spends time painting modern military

## 53 History of Late Roman Military

A quick book review

## 54 Blast from the Past

We take a look at Song of Blades and Heroes

## 57 T-62 Tank

A new book looking at the T-62 tank from Osprey Publishing

## 58 Lost Samurai

A look at new book from Pen and Sword

## 59 Macedonian Phalanx

A book review

## 60 Missing Legion

A new book looking at the missing 9th Legion

## 61 E-sports opening

A new E-sports studio opening in London



[.twitter.com/Irregularmag](https://twitter.com/Irregularmag)



[.facebook.com/irregularmagazine](https://facebook.com/irregularmagazine)



[youtube.com/irregularmagazine](https://youtube.com/irregularmagazine)

The Irregular Team

Editor: Jason Hubbard

Staff Writer: Alex Garbett

Proofing: Irregular Team

Cover Art: Adobe Stock.com

Graphic Design/Layout: Jason Hubbard

Interior Art:

Web Site: Dave Barker

Social Media: Irregular Team



# Summer Issue 2021

# Editorial

**Jason Hubbard**

Well we're back for another issue, and we're still in the pandemic though here in the UK things have finally started to open up. Sporting venues have started to allow spectators again, and this means folk are meeting up in pubs and gaming clubs are slowly starting to meet up again.

There has been some big news from Games Workshop, which includes a new edition of Age of Sigmar, but even bigger news is the announcement of a streaming service. Both of which we cover in this issue of the magazine.

I've managed to paint another ton of miniatures to add the growing amount of toy soldiers I've completed during this pandemic. The one thing I can say that's been good about the pandemic is the fact that I've managed to read quite a few books. Normally I don't really have the time to plough through books as quickly as I've been able to in the last 12 months.

Hopefully towards the end of the year, we'll see far more conventions being held. Whilst virtual conventions have been great, with some being better than others. Attending one in person is going to be far better, wandering around traders and demo games, chatting with like minded folk and checking out all the new shiny.

So, what am I looking forward to over the next few months, well firstly getting some gaming in with friends? A planned trip down to Warhammer World with Alex and wandering around the miniature museum again. I've got some new projects to start which includes painting one of the Macfarlane figures. I also plan to start filming some videos for the Irregular Magazine YouTube channel and also producing more podcast episodes.

Well that's all folks.....see you next time, and stay safe.

Jason



## Splendid News for Digital Gamers



Following the announcement earlier this year that Board Game Arena (BGA), the leading digital platform for playing board games online, has become a part of the Asmodee Group, the first in a wave of beloved titles has arrived. Joining the ranks of over 250 official online versions of fantastic games is Splendor.

Splendor is the first major game from the Asmodee catalogue to appear on BGA since its acquisition, but it won't be the last! Several highly anticipated titles are in development for the platform, to be released in the coming months.

In this iconic game, part of our Modern Classics range, players take on the roles of Renaissance merchants competing to acquire mines, ships and other goods via the trade of chips and cards. Splendor's simple and elegant engine-building framework has seen it become a favourite for many since its initial release in 2014 and now it's even easier to enjoy that ever before.

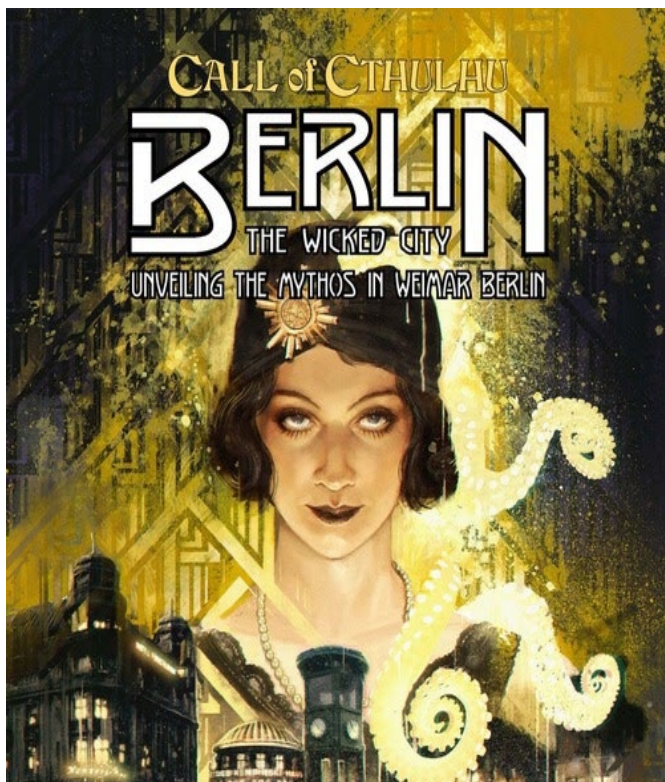
BGA have worked together with publisher Space Cowboys to ensure that the online experience as closely matches the in-person one as possible, with enhanced graphics to mimic the high print quality of the tabletop edition's materials. Through BGA, players can easily share a game with their friends or challenge opponents from across the globe with the inclusion of worldwide virtual competitive play.

## Award winning artist joins Chaosium

Chaosium Inc, publisher of the Call of Cthulhu and RuneQuest tabletop roleplaying games, welcomes award-winning artist Loïc Muzy to the Chaosium team. Loïc has formally joined the company as Staff Artist. A professional illustrator in France for more than 10 years, Loïc works mainly in the field of role-playing games. His award-winning work is well known from the English and French editions of Call of Cthulhu and can be seen in other RPG lines including Les Lames du Cardinal.

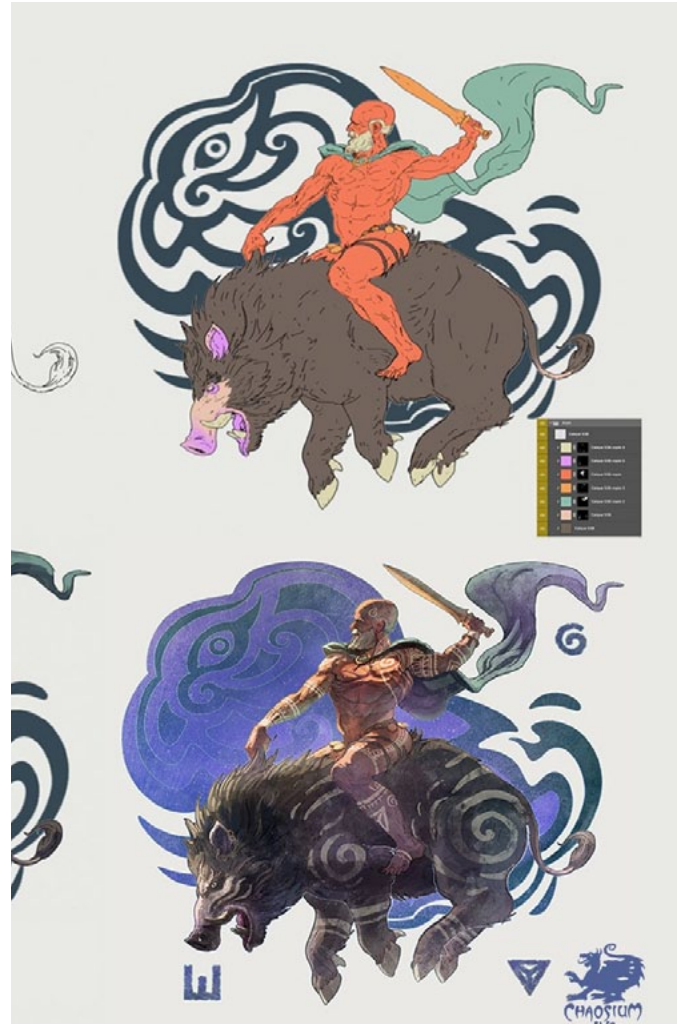


Loïc's cover art for the critically acclaimed 2019 Call of Cthulhu release Berlin the Wicked City won multiple awards. His art for 2017's Petersen Field Guide to Lovecraftian Horrors won the Gold ENnie for Best Interior Art.



Loïc's work also features extensively in Chaosium's new edition of The Malleus Monstrorum, a two-volume collection that vividly portrays over 250 alien and otherworldly horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos.

"The Lovecraft Mythos is a something of a red thread in Loïc's career; to date, he has produced more than 1000 illustrations for this universe – but we're delighted he likes to experiment with new settings too, such as RuneQuest's world of Glorantha", said Chaosium creative director Jeff Richard.



Loïc's current major project is working closely with Jeff on The Gods of Glorantha, a monumental compendium of all the religions in Greg Stafford's Glorantha, setting for the RuneQuest RPG.

Loïc Muzy company bio here: <https://www.chaosium.com/loic-muzy>

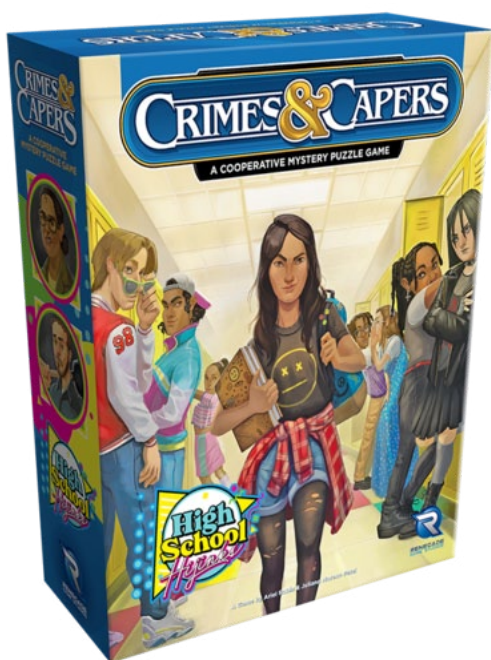
Good Time Society!



## COMING THIS SUMMER!

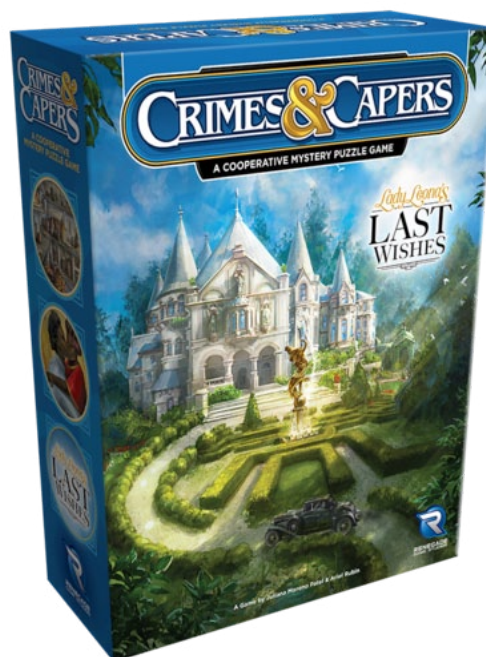


Crimes & Capers is a modern reimagining of the classic Murder Mystery Party Game. Players each take on distinctive roles. They'll need to share information from their personal journals, solve escape room style puzzles, figure out how to unlock more information, and use everything they have uncovered to ultimately solve the overarching mystery!



## HOW IT WORKS

Through the course of the game, players will solve individual puzzles, read their journals and share knowledge to get the lock combination, and comb through artifacts that they have unlocked. Finally players combine the evidence they discovered with the information in the journals to solve the mystery!



## FEATURES:

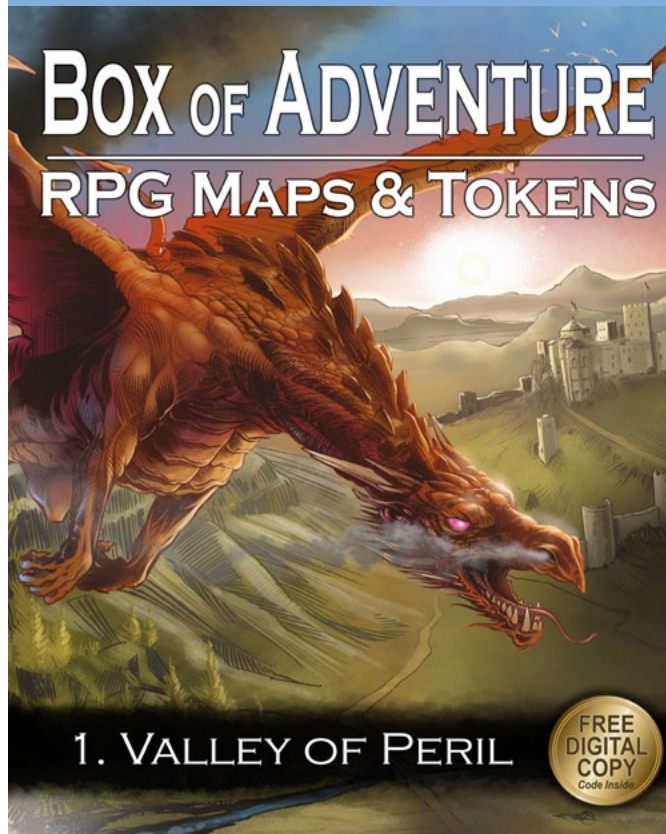
- No special skills or prior knowledge required!
- Unique gameplay and approachable style makes it appealing for all players.
- Combines the beloved classic of murder mystery parties with on-trend escape room style puzzling.
- Cooperative Play – players share their personal information in order to solve the mystery. No reveal where one player discovers they are the evil doer!
- Game works for people who want to dress up and roleplay as well as for people who have NO interest in acting.

## AT A GLANCE

- Number of Players: 4-6
- For Ages: 12+
- Playing Time: 60 min
- Game Type: Cooperative Mystery Puzzle Game



## Loke Battle Mats' Box of Adventure – Valley of Peril



Loke Battle Mats' Box of Adventure – Valley of Peril – is a brand-new innovation from the publishers who brought you the Big Book of Battle Mats. This is the system agnostic kit you have been waiting for. It combines modular maps and tokens of monsters, baddies and NPCs, everything you need to run any fantasy RPG. There are also terrain tokens and building tokens. As a result you can customise the maps and build your encounter areas however you want them.



### Tokens

Like the maps, the cut-out tokens are laminated and thus you can wipe them clean. This means that a simple marker pen will enable you to track damage and status effects by simply writing on the tokens. This means that is an encounter has multiple monsters, for example rats, you can now track them easily! The tokens are also colour coded and numbers to make running combat encounters simple and easy!

The tokens include all the beasts and monsters you would expect, as well as humanoid opponents including bandits and pirates. We have also included tokens which can be used as PCs or NPCs. All beautifully individually illustrated, no duplicates!

### Maps

The map designs are modular and you can play each individually or combine them to create larger play areas. So you can play the map which best fits your table space and encounter size. And as the maps are wipe clean they can be customised and reused many, many times.

The map layouts are pictured inside the box, which you can use as a dungeon map or even dice tray. The magnetic lid seals securely and snaps shut. As a result you can safely store the maps and tokens in the box between games.

This fantasy themed system agnostic kit has everything you need for running any fantasy themed RPG. The maps cover the essential terrains you will need, and include a dungeon, cave system, wooded ruins, grasslands and much more.

We have also included a code which can be redeemed on our website to claim a free digital copy of all the maps and tokens for use online on VTT platforms.

### Key Product Features –

- 24 modular wipe clean Battle Maps
- 300+ Cut out Tokens
- Code to redeem a free digital copy

RRP is £32/\$32. The Box of Adventure – Valley of Peril is available from your favourite online retailer, local hobby store or [www.lokebattlemats.com](http://www.lokebattlemats.com) The Valley of Peril launches in July.



## King Spawn new monthly spin-off



Todd McFarlane unleashes the KING SPAWN #1 comic title, which will continue the dramatic events from the recent blockbuster SPAWN'S UNIVERSE #1 comic book. It will be McFarlane's first new monthly series dedicated to the original Spawn character since 1992. Joining an elite group of famed heroes like Spider-Man, Batman, and Superman with more than one monthly title devoted to the same character. KING SPAWN is expected to have even bigger sales than the record-setting SPAWN'S UNIVERSE #1.

"My goal is to give fans twice as much SPAWN titles to read than they had before... and at the lowest price possible! And by the end of the year, there will be a Spawn-related book available for fans every week of the month," said Todd McFarlane, SPAWN Creator. "We will be introducing new heroes and villains along with classic characters as we expand the SPAWN Universe into the future."

To that point, one of the all-time classic fan-favorite villains from the original series makes his long-awaited return in the initial storyline of this new title.

An all-star creative team will help launch this series, including writers Sean Lewis, Todd McFarlane, and artists Javier Fernandez, Brett Booth, Philip Tan, Stephen Segovia, Todd McFarlane, and Marcio Takara. Along with famed cover artists Greg Capullo, Sean Gordon Murphy, Puppeteer Lee, David Finch, McFarlane, Booth, and a few more still to be announced.

The release of KING SPAWN #1 is nearly three decades in the making and marks the first time a #1 SPAWN issue has been available, in monthly form, in over twenty-eight years. Issue #1 is a massive 56 pages thick with stunning art and action-packed storytelling.

KING SPAWN #1 will be available at comic book shops and digital platforms, including Amazon Kindle, Apple Books, comiXology, and Google Play on August 18. SRP \$5.99

KING SPAWN #1 Cover by LEE

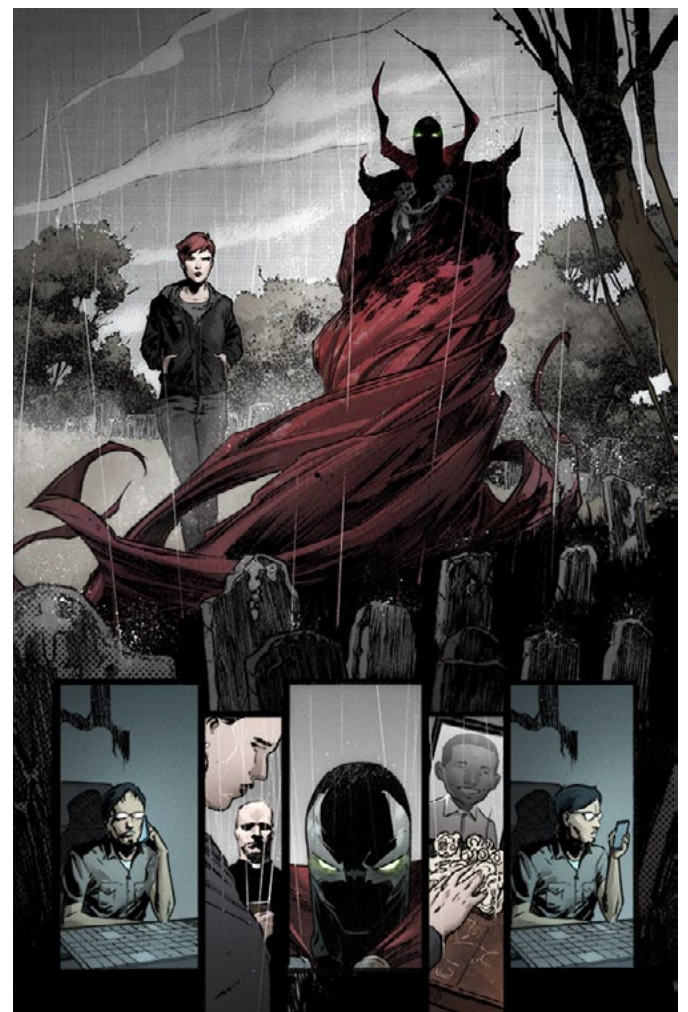
KING SPAWN #1 Cover by McFARLANE

KING SPAWN #1 Cover by FINCH

KING SPAWN #1 Cover by MURPHY

KING SPAWN #1 Cover by CAPULLO

KING SPAWN #1 Cover by BOOTH



## Black Void ventures Into the Oblivious Depths!



Into the Oblivious Depths is a quintessential Black Void adventure where the characters are thrust into a perilous journey exploring the wonders and horrors beyond Llyhn the Eternal as they search for a new home for Humanity.

"Welcome to the Tadh Consortium, a Ka'Alum faction dedicated to launching Void-traversing expeditions discovering and exploring new worlds. You and your compatriots have been hired as part of an expeditionary crew to travel the Void, investigating uncharted worlds to find a new home for humankind.

Guided by a charter based on rumours and fragmented reports of paradisaical worlds, you prepare to voyage into the oblivious depths aboard the Void Vessel "The Sentinel".

You have all heard the fireside stories about the horrors awaiting unprepared Voidfarers. Still, the rewards of this venture and the chance to bring hope to humanity are certainly worth any risks...

While your travels may indeed be perilous, the clandestine, callous, and nefarious scheming behind the scenes may well be the greatest threat you have to face."

- 132-page full-colour hardback adventure for the BLACK VOID RPG.

- Ideally suited for four to six characters, each in the 65-75 character points range.

- Four brand new Cosmic worlds for the players to explore.

- New thrilling monsters and exciting sentient species with full stats and artwork.

- Gorgeous layout and original artworks by the core book artists.

"Into the Oblivious Depths" is a must-have adventure for Black Void Arbiters and players looking to explore the wonders and horrors beyond Llyhn the Eternal, epicentre of the Cosmos.

"Into the Oblivious Depths" is an enticing adventure for players enjoying exploration, horror, and intrigue scenarios.

"Into the Oblivious Depths" is the second in the series of stand-alone scenarios that can be played separately or readily integrated into ongoing Black Void campaigns.

The exciting storyline of "Into the Oblivious Depths" can be played as a complete campaign or easily adapted into four separate modules.

Modiphius Entertainment



Books of CyberPunk Battle Mats are now Official Maps for Cyberpunk RED



Loke Battle Mats' Books of CyberPunk Battle Mats cover a wide range of essential encounter areas, so you will have the map for any dark future adventure at your fingertips. From neon lit streets to imposing corporate lobbies, derelict container dumps and shanty towns to futuristic street cafés, the map you need is here.

Cyberpunk RED is the latest edition of the classic roleplaying game of the Dark Future featuring updated mechanics and new lore set in 2045, midway between the events of Cyberpunk 2020 and Cyberpunk 2077.

Established in 2016, Loke BattleMats are UK-based designers and publishers of the Book of Battle Mats range for tabletop roleplaying games. Their lay flat map books combine the usefulness of flat battle maps to illustrate and track RPG encounters with the portability of a book, giving you dozens of map pages at your fingertips.

Founded in 1985, R. Talsorian Games is an award-winning producer of tabletop roleplaying games, including bestsellers Cyberpunk RED and The Witcher Tabletop Roleplaying Game as well as Castle Falkenstein, the Mekton series, and Teenagers from Outer Space. Mike Pondsmith, the company's founder, was inducted into the Origins Awards Hall of Fame in 2006.

"We used the Big Book of Cyberpunk Battle Mats when we were designing Cyberpunk RED, so when it came time to partner up with someone for official maps, there was no question who we'd turn to. Loke Battle

Mats are a perfect way to visualize any game set in the Dark Future." Mike Pondsmith, creator of Cyberpunk RED

"I have been a great admirer of R. Talsorian Games for many years, and I have trodden the streets of Night City many, many times. I am delighted to have the opportunity to work with an organisation whose games have shaped my own experience as a GM and player over the years." Matt Henderson, Founder & Co-Owner Loke Battle Mats

Loke Battle Mats' Books of Battle Mats are available from your friendly local hobby store, favourite online retailer or [www.lokebattlemats.store](http://www.lokebattlemats.store).

Would you like to stock Loke Battle Mats products? Loke Battle Mats are represented to the hobby sector by PSI so you can stock our books via your usual hobby distributor.

## Spot the Clues and Nab the Culprit in Turbo Sleuth — Coming Soon!



WizKids is pleased to announce the upcoming release of Turbo Sleuth, a real time detective game by Daniel Lee Yingjie!

A murder most foul has been committed! Was it Old Miser McGreedy's wastrel of a son? The suspicious maid? The business partner? The oddly nonchalant butler?



In this puzzle speed solving game, players will compete simultaneously to find the solution and solve the mystery before time runs out! Only the first few players may attempt to solve the case, but rush to a hasty wrong judgment and the murderer up the ante for the next round!

Each round of a Basic game of Turbo Sleuth consists of 2 phases: Analysis, and Solution.



During the Analysis phase, players will compete simultaneously to find the Suspect and the Weapon among 3 Clue cards placed in the center of the table and use their Answer cards to connect the Suspect and the Weapon that was used.

After they connect a Suspect and Weapon, a player will grab one of the Score tokens. The Analysis phase ends when all Score tokens have been taken.

Next, the Solution phase occurs, and players will determine the solution to the case by using the Solution key to match the cards used during the round to the correct answer.

Only players holding a Score token can score points for solving the case, so a quick and keen eye is imperative if you want to be the winning Sleuth!

The game also features an Advanced mode, which incorporates additional objectives like finding Witnesses, Missing Evidence, Alibis, and more!



## Summertime — Coming Soon!



DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince invite you to hang with them at the hottest spots in Philly. You will cruise, groove, and unwind across town, trying to vibe with them to prove you're the coolest in the crew. Do you have the energy to keep up with everyone else who has their eyes on the crown?



In this quick and clever card game inspired by the classic hit song, players have to outwit each other with a series of tricky decisions, as they try to play Action, Energy, and Boost cards to end up with the most total Energy at a Spot to win it. Whoever has the most points from Spots at the end of the game is the winner!



Quick but deep gameplay: Players have a limited number of cards that are worth different values in different situations.

Read your opponents: Use your action cards to trip up your opponents' plans, and to keep them from stopping yours!

Never the same twice: As you visit Spots in a different order each game, you'll have to find a balance of adaptability and planning ahead to win!





# Ed's Challenge

Jason Hubbard



So we've been slowly coming out of another lockdown and this has allowed me to push on with a ton more painting than normal. This has meant I've managed to get another chunk of the gray army painted.

## Stargrave

I also started painting some miniatures for Stargrave, this is a game I'm looking forward to jumping in and playing once we're allowed to meet up at the local club.



I've managed to paint up a selection of minis, which includes two from Sedition Wars, a Robot which was a Salute mini, a smaller plastic robot which I have no idea where it came from, an Infinity mini and 3D printed Dwarf Engineer.

I also started putting together an all female space pirate crew. Captain Fang and her Motley Crew.

After the war Captain Fang Zhang recruited an all female crew of pirates. These were all women who had been displaced by the war or who had served in military units. They'd become fed up with the men running things and in their belief screwing things up.



This is the crew so far, I still need to stat these out.

### Captain Fang Zheng



Fang had previously served in various positions on salvage and general cargo ships reaching the status of Captain prior to the war. When the war broke she was conscripted against her will and had her ship confiscated. This made her quite angry, so towards the end of the war she became involved with a group of misfits who were planning a heist of a corporation pay ship, carrying money intended for serving troops. She used her cut to purchase a new ship and recruit a new crew. She is still wanted for this heist and many others.



Lt. Kerala Stride is a former Naval officer who became disillusioned with the war and the military. Fang found her drinking her life away on some forgotten planet. Fang offered her a place on the crew, where she soon rose to become the second in command providing more needed military strategy when planning heists.



Sleika Marse is a former military sniper who joined the crew because she'd become bored with civilian life and couldn't adjust. She's an expert shot with most weapons.



Jezzika is a former justice officer, who went rogue and more of a crook than those she arrested. She joined the crew before she was arrested for her criminal activity.



Her highness (Ariadne) was a rich woman before the war, but her fortune disappeared when the planet she lived on was invaded. She became a spy and infiltrator during the war, and has since used these skills in assisting in heists and other nefarious activities. She has a fondness for gold and sparkly stones.



The war bot- this was a left over from the war that the crew salvaged and repaired. It's used for when something needs smashing down, breaking into or just creating havoc.



## Lord of the Rings

I've not done much with this project over the last couple of months apart from paint a few of the Orcs. I decided to go with a traditional skin colour of green, but I made it too dark and I'm not completely happy with the end result. I think I'll stick with green skin tone going forward but will pick up the new green from Games Workshop that's part of the new Age of Sigmar release.



## Test of Honor

I've made some more progress with this project, and painted quite a few miniatures, which includes the last of my old school Citadel ninjas. I've also built a couple of more building for the Asian town board, and started painting them but I'll provide more information next issue as I plan to have them painted and added to tiles by then.

I still have quite a few miniatures to paint for this project and I plan to finish a few more before the Autumn. Hopefully this project will be finished by the end of the year.



## 40K Kill Team

I've actually made a start on some Eldar for Kill Team, as well as finish another Space Marine. I've also painted up a Death Guard Marine for a possible kill team I plan to do later in the year. I've no intention of playing the full 40K game but will stick to Kill Team as it allows me to have a flavour of the Warhammer world without building and painting a large army. I'm especially tempted by the new Krieg models in the forthcoming Kill Team starter set which will be released in the Summer.





## Baron's War and other odds and sods

When the new game Baron's War was released I took the dive and picked up a copy of the rules. I've had this Games Workshop Brettonian Lord lying around since 2005 unpainted and gathering dust. So I decided he'd be ideal to build a small force around for the game. I then decided to look up my coat of arms to base his heraldry on. Since finishing him I've built and under coated a small retinue which is waiting to be painted.



I've also managed to paint a small number of miniatures for Burows and Badgers. I decided to build an Asian themed warband centred around two miniatures, one of which is the Kung Fu Panda from the Bushido range. Alongside these two I managed to get three mice painted up, which will form a mice warband of warriors.



I haven't painted many historical miniatures this time round, apart from a handful which included two Celtic Heroes for SPQR. I still have the entire warband of warriors still to build and paint for this along with more Romans.

It's a similar situation for Mortal Gods as well, I've two mounted heroes that are part painted currently, but other than that no further progress has been made.



I did manage to paint some random fantasy miniatures for use in various games such as Song of Blades and Heroes and Frostgrave. These include three of the Cel-tos miniatures we reviewed in the last issue. They were really easy and quick to paint, which has prompted me to purchase more from the range.



I also managed to paint up an Albion Priest from Games Workshop, I've had this model for a while and I intend to build a Frostgrave warband around him.

During the Summer I plan to paint up the retinue for Baron's War and get that small project finished ready for gaming. Finish some more models for LotR which will include some Rohim riders.

On the painting table to be finished are some Afrika Korp by Perry Miniatures, plus under coated I have two Stargrave crews, some civilians for the Modern project, as well as some dismounted Napoleonic Dragoons for use with the Chosen Men rules by Os-prey.

The next major hobby items will be the building being based on to tiles for the Asian town project. Also if I have time I plan to make a start on the river sections as well.





WARHAMMER CO.



# Big News from Games Workshop

In the last couple of months Games Workshop has announced two major pieces of news. The first was regarding Age of Sigmar, and that it was getting a new edition. The other news they announced it was a streaming service along with some content.

To begin with we'll look at the upcoming 3rd edition rule set for Age of Sigmar. The edition plans to further refine the rules and push the background narrative in the armies of good finally heading in a winning direction. The release date is for the launch box and new rule book is July 3rd, but there is no date for the new starter boxes. In the announcement Games Workshop did promise that the new rules would be revised, refined and thoroughly retested. They also mentioned a new story style mode that suggests a more narrative play style. So, at the moment release date for the new edition. There's a new core book for second edition on its way, which should Segway nicely into 3rd edition.

They also released an image of a map for the new edition, which suggests the main enemies in the storyline will be destruction which will be a welcome change from Death and Chaos.

WARHAMMER COMMUNITY



Heroes will gain a Heroic action and Monsters gain a Monstrous Rampage, this has been designed to give games a more cinematic feel and allow the heroes and villains to create those outlandish exploits on the battlefield.

So, before we get onto the next news announcement, we'll take a quick look at the launch box set, Dominion. The box comes with 60 new models, it a combination of





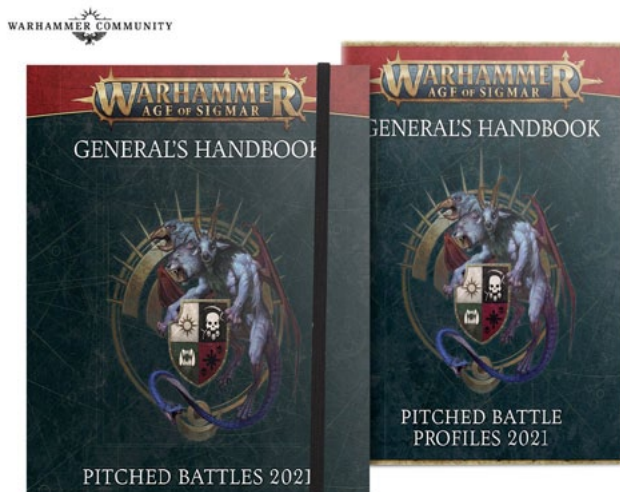
Stormcast Eternals and Orruk War clans, plus a hardback copy of the Core Book with exclusive cover art.

The new core rules will run to 360 pages, with the first 245 pages of the book are dedicated to background, art-work, miniatures showcases and a history of the Mortal Realms. This includes the events from the Broken Realms series taking us right up to the current timeline – the Era of the Beast. There are some new maps which fleshes out more cities and locations,



Crusade settlement, Orruk Flesh, Hobgrot Hide, and Thondia Brown base paints to paint your new Orruks and the new novel Dominion novel by Darius Hink.

This is just a glimpse of what's to come for the new edition, as usual Games Workshop are on fire with their releases. Though I'm not tempted to start playing Age of Sigmar. I'm tempted to grab some of the new Orruks to paint. (Editor)



this is something that has continued from the 2nd edition book. It provides us more of an insight regarding the locations we're able to fight for. The rules are broken down more to make learning and digesting the rules much easier.

There are also some other items that will be released on July 3rd, and this includes Pitched Battles 2021 and Pitched Battle Profiles 2021 books, set of six scenery pieces represents the trappings of a Dawnbringer



So, the other major announcement by Games Workshop was the launch of a streaming service in July this year called Warhammer Plus. They also stated there would be 11 new animations at the time of launch. As you can expect this piece of news generated a lot of chatter on the internet. The biggest comment mentioned by a lot of people was that 11 animations wasn't enough to launch a streaming service, especially when some of the animations are only 10 minutes long.



One possibility is that they move all the free video that is currently online and all future video to the streaming service. This would mean that there is unlikely to any future free video content online. They would definitely need something more than just the 11 animations they announced especially if they want folk to pay for it.

The streaming service will run through your TV, mobile device and tablets, though as yet price and subscription details hasn't been announced. They also said it would function as a premium program, which will offer subscriber benefits.

As yet the benefits haven't been announced, so we've no idea what they are and if they're worth subscribing for.



This was one of the major comments from a lot of people chatting online that there would need to be a lot more content, especially when you consider that GW is unlikely to charge less than £5 a month.

## Warhammer Plus Update

As we were going into layout GW announced further details regarding the streaming service from them. There is now a launch date which will be 25th August and there will be two price point, either a monthly subscription of £4.99 or an annual subscription of £49.99. Surprising the price is below £5 a month, I was expecting it to be closer to £7-8 a month.

One of the big reveals was a free exclusive miniature for anyone who subscribes for 12 months, either via an annual or monthly payment. It will be a choice of either a Vindicare Assassin or an Orc Megaboss. Subscribers would receive the miniature at the end of the 12 months.

This would be to stop people subscribing, getting their hands on the mini and then cancelling the subscription. On launch there will be episodes from two animation series available to watch, Hammer and Bolter along with Angels of Death. Hammer and Bolter is an anthology series, where every episode is a new story, whereas Angels of Death is a series that will follow a crew of Blood Angels. Episodes will be roughly between 10-15 minutes in length.

Alongside the animations there will be three new regular video shows. The first is Masterclass presented by Louise Sugden, which be a weekly painting tutorial covering more complex techniques each week. Louise is basically the new face of Citadel Painting replacing Duncan who left to create his own online channel.

The next show/series is called Battle Reports with Patrick Price, which pretty much does what it says on the tin. It's a battle report show, with different battles each week. The third and final new show is Lore Masters hosted by Wade. This will be a weekly show that will cover the lore and background from the Warhammer worlds. He'll also be talking to members from the studio team as well as delving into the archives of Games workshop. This would be a great show to have on in the background whilst painting.

Also, as part of the Warhammer Plus subscription will be the apps for 40K and Sigmar. This means that if you currently subscribe to the 40K app, then switching to Warhammer Plus is going to be great value for money. As part of the subscription, you'll get access to the Warhammer Vault, which is a back catalogue of publications that are no longer available. There will also be every issue of White Dwarf from 2020 included with more being added each week.

I'd would have liked the current ongoing digital WD being added as part of the subscription, as this would have made Warhammer Plus really great value for money and would have tempted me for sure into subscribing.

On top of all this there will also be event extras for subscribers, and subscriber only offers as well. Overall, this looks to be great value for money if you're a GW player or fan with plenty to offer you. Will I subscribe, maybe for a month or two but I doubt I will long term as I don't play a lot of Warhammer, apart from Kill Team and Warcry.



At the time of going to press Games Workshop made another major announcement, which was a new Kill Team box. What made this a big deal was one of the factions, Krieg in plastic.



Some may be wondering why this was such big news, well prior to this release Krieg were only available in resin from Forge World. The prospect of plastic Krieg for many is massive news, especially for Imperial Guard players.



The plastic Cadians are a little long in the tooth and while they were great when they were first released they've since become a little tired. So the prospect of new guard plastics that aren't Cadian for many is great news, myself included.

So what's the other faction to go up against the Krieg, well it's greenskins, Orks and alongside the Kill Team release they also announced some new cool Ork models to be released over the summer.



So what else is in the new Kill Team box? Well a new rule book, alongside a faction book for each of the Kill Teams. There is also some Ork terrain which looks quite good, and can be used in normal 40K games. There are also the usual amount of counters and dice needed to play the game.



# Painting Wargame Figures

(Axis Forces on the Eastern Front)

*Author: Andy Singleton*

*Publisher: Pen and Sword*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Andy Singleton has been modelling and painting most of his life and has been a professional commission figure painter for some years now. Here he shares his experience and tips of the trade for painting Axis forces on WW2's Eastern Front: Germans, Romanians, Hungarians and Italians and Finns.

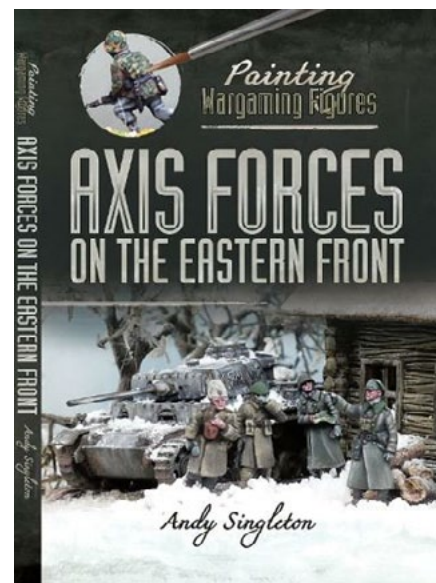
Each of the chapters is broken into step-by-step guides explaining the steps and colours required to paint the various uniforms used. The emphasis is on quickly achievable results and practical advice that is applicable to painting units or whole armies for wargaming purposes in a reasonable time frame. The techniques described are designed to easily be adaptable to figures of all sizes. Andy's clear, step-by-step guidance is primarily designed for those new to historical gaming and takes the reader through the process from the initial preparation and assembly of the figure, to finishing and basing.

Andy has another book out; he's blasting through these painting books. This time he focuses on the Axis forces that swerved in the Eastern European theatre of war. All of his previous books we've reviewed we've been really impressed by them; this book is no exception.

The book is 134 pages long, in an easy to read and follow style. The images are well shot, and clearly illustrate the technique Andy is writing about. I found the painting tutorials really easy to follow, with some great techniques to try.

I particularly liked the tutorial for painting camouflage, this is one of those techniques that many hobbyists are reluctant to try as they believe it's quite difficult to do, yet Andy's tutorial shows it's quite an easy technique to do. He provides a really easy straight forward way to paint camo.

Each chapter presents another step-by-step tutorial explaining a new technique or another type of uniform to paint. Andy places emphasis on achieving excellent and quick results.

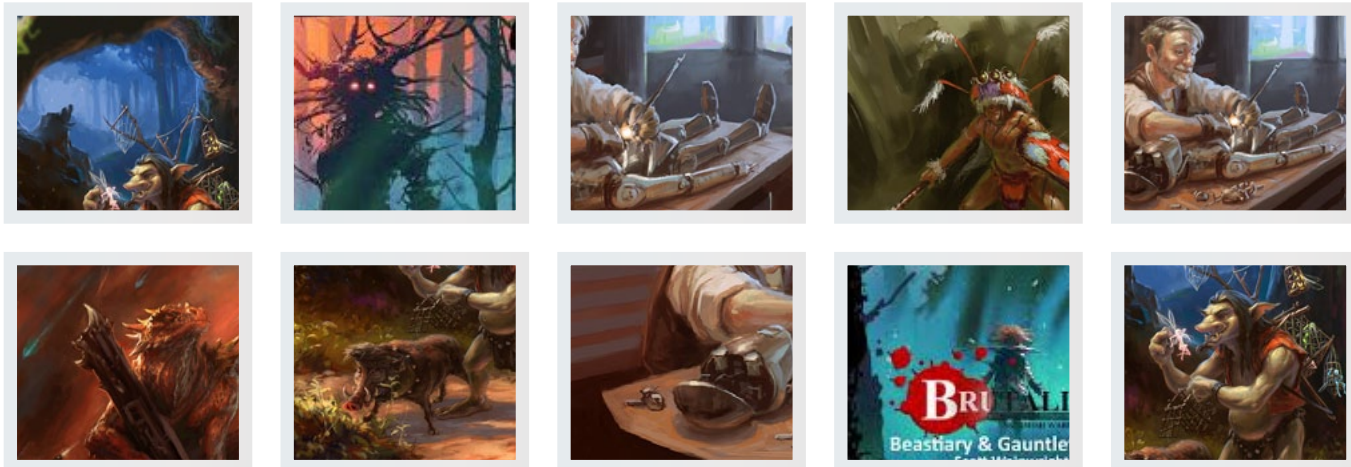


The advice he provides is easy to follow and can quite easily be used on different scales.

So is this book worth picking up, I'd say yes especially if you're planning to build an Axis force. It's especially good for those who are starting out in the hobby, the tutorials are very clear and easy to follow, which is great for beginners.

It will also be a very useful resource for those who are already in the hobby, there's plenty in this book for an old timer in the hobby to benefit from.





# Brutality Skirmish Wargame



iBrutality is an agnostic skirmish wargame designed and self-published by Scott Wainwright. It's independently published through Lulu and is a full color hard back book at over 100 pages. It's illustrated throughout with some great artwork, and there is also a full color map of the realm. What makes this an interesting idea is the fact you can literally use any miniature you have in your collection, regardless of genre. You could create a warband with a mix of miniatures that includes, fantasy, Sci-Fi and historical. I love the idea of being able to grab whatever miniatures I have to hand and creating a warband to play.

So, what's the game all about, well for starters it's not just a set of rules to play. Scott has also created a rich backdrop in which to set your games against. In fact, the first 36 or so pages provide a plethora of background material about the setting.

## The setting

The goddess Ishtar has captured races and creatures from around the universe and trapped them in her realm, where death no longer really exists. The reason for this is to try and grow her godly powers, she achieves this through their violence, death and rebirth, and prayers.



Every mortal being that's grabbed and thrown into the Brutality realm, is shown the power of the goddess through being brought back to life after dying in the realm. This faith in the goddess increases her power which allows her to reach out further and further into the universe to pluck more unsuspecting mortals. This thus helps to increase her power, and she spurs on their violence, lust and depravity to keep her power growing.

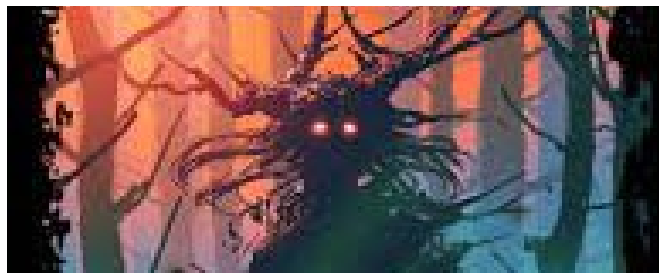
Races can communicate to each other regardless of language because of Ishtar's power, which allows everyone to understand each other. Not everyone in the realm is running around trying to kill anything that moves, there are many trying to carry out a normal life.

There are nine factions in the Brutality realm, including the Cult of One Mother, who worship the goddess hoping that she'll favor them. The author has given each faction a couple of pages of background information. There are even robots, machinery and AI machines that have been dumped into the realm by Ishtar, spare parts for these are a problem. So, some of them will continue to operate until they can no longer be repaired.

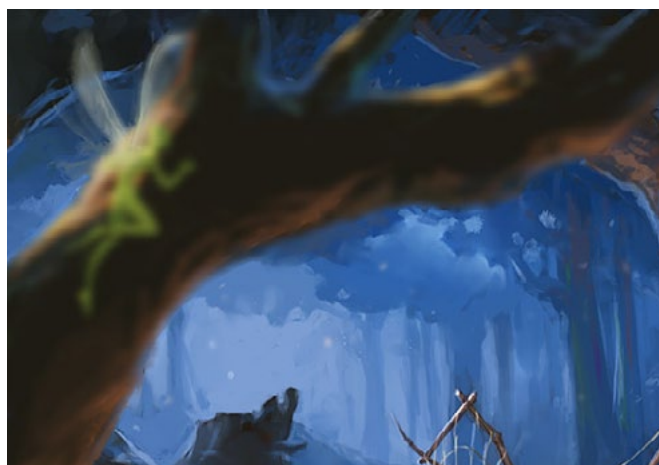
There is a great map of the realm, which showcases different areas within the world. These different areas can provide help or hinderances to your warband, which are specific to those regions/areas.

## The game system

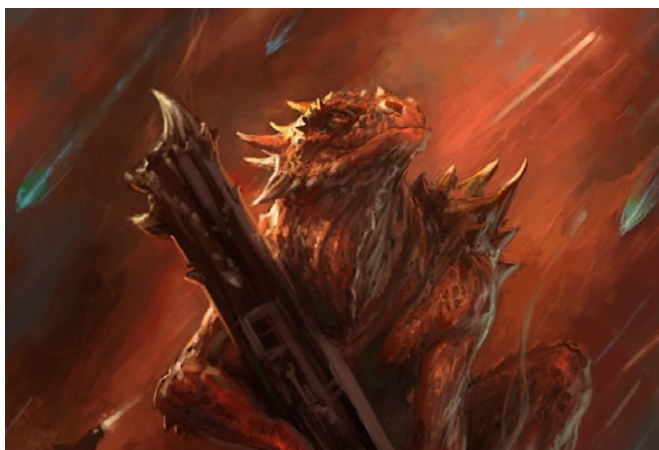
The game is played with 4-8 miniatures per side, and these will represent your warband members. The rules are designed to be played with 28mm miniatures, but with a little adjustment I believe it could easily be played with 15 or 20mm figures as well. It's advisable to play on a 3x3 foot board, but equally you play on a slightly larger or smaller board. To play this game at its best I would suggest you use quite a lot of terrain,



especially for blocking line of sight. It's also possible to use RPG grid maps and Simon suggests that you assume all elevated terrain is 4" off the ground. I've played a short quite game using the Loke Battlemat books, with some 3d terrain on top and it worked out perfectly, especially as I was introducing my niece to the game.



The game plays with D10, with a straightforward stat line for warband members, which includes movement, fight skill, dexterity. Will power, hit points, save and attacks. There are two activation phases during game play, Movement and Combat. When each model is activated, it must carry out any movement before partaking in actual combat. During movement phase the model may perform an action such as move, stand up, pick up a dropped weapon or take aim. During the combat phase a model may perform an action that includes, use all powers, run, use an item, shooting all ranged weapons, charge and make a melee attack or any number of other actions as stipulated in the book.







Models can have powers, these are such things as magic, technology or superpowers. Power effects are active until either the next activation or when the character is killed. Though healing and summoning effects won't go away like other powers do. There are a number of powers included in the rule book, but it should be easy for most to create any powers and rules for those which aren't included in the rules.

The game can be played as a one off, but Brutality comes in to its own when it's played as a campaign in a series of linked games. As you play through a series of linked games your warband becomes wealthier and stronger, though remember every time someone dies, they slowly start to lose their sanity. They will then start to develop insanities that will change their personalities and the way they act/react on the table. This could possibly be a bit of a tad inconvenience especially when a member of the warband won't do as they're expected.

A game of Brutality can be played very quickly, which makes this an ideal pick up and play system when time is of the essence. It's also possible to play through a short campaign in an afternoon. The book contains ten scenarios with a further 5 more which can be played as solo or cooperative missions, which means there is plenty of ideas to get running with.

The rules also include an AI system for hostile warbands or creatures that you can pit your warband against in the solo missions.

This game lives up to its name Brutality, the fact that your warband members never really die and slowly over time will go insane just adds to the fun of the skirmish system. Brutality is essentially an RPG lite skirmish game, which embraces narrative gaming in a way that makes this a must rule set to have your shelf.









# The Rise of the Tang Dynasty

(The Reunification of China and the Military Response to the Steppe Nomads 581-626AD)

*Author: Julian Romane*

*Publisher: Pen and Sword*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

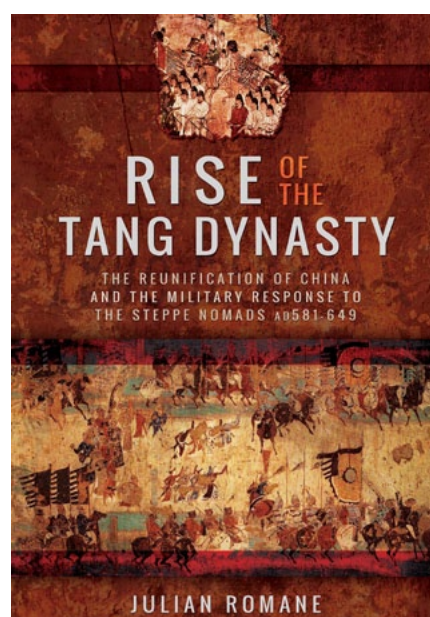
Julian Romane examines the military events behind the emergence of the Sui and Tang dynasties in the period 581-626 AD. Narrating the campaigns and battles, he analyses in detail the strategy and tactics employed, a central theme being the collision of the steppe cavalry with Chinese infantry armies.

By the fourth century AD, horse nomads had seized northern China. Conflict with these Turkic interlopers continued throughout the 5th and most of the 6th century. The emergence of the Sui dynasty (581-618) brought some progress, but internal weakness led to their rapid collapse. The succeeding House of Tang, however, provided the necessary stability and leadership to underpin military success. This was largely the achievement of Li Shimin, who later became the second Tang Emperor. By the start of Li Shimin's reign as Emperor Tang Taizong, effective military organizations had been developed and China reunified. His military campaigns are examples of tactical and strategic virtuosity that demonstrate the application of the distinctive Chinese way of war expounded in Chinese military manuals, including Li Shimin's own writings.

This book provides a great jumping off point of the history of the Tang Dynasty. It's a period in Chinese history that's often called a Golden Age. It was a period where the Chinese started to communicate with lands far to the west such as Persia and the Byzantine Empire. Good and ideas started to flow both ways along the Silk Road.

The major military threat to the Tang Dynasty came from the Turkic tribes along the frontier. The Turks were defeated in 657 and thus began 150 years of Tang control over the region.

The author does a very good job writing about the military campaigns and troops involved along with the major players in the period. What was lacking in the book were maps, it was quite hard to follow along at times without being able to view a map as a reference.



So, I ended up spending time trying to find suitable maps, so

I had an understanding of where places were and their place in the region. The book desperately needs some maps to act as reference points.

Overall, it was an enjoyable read, and a great starting place for anyone interested in the history of China. I'd highly recommend anyone thinking of starting a wargaming campaign set in China to consider the Tang Dynasty. There's plenty of battles and potential fighting the Turks. It was a great read and provided an insight into a period of history and country that many of us don't know much about. It's definitely staying on my shelf, and I'm considering building a Tang period army. If anyone is interested in the period, I can recommend the TV series *The Longest Day in Chang'an*. This will give you a flavour of the period visually, plus it's a great story.

# Global TV Shows to watch

Jason Hubbard



Some more TV shows that might provide some inspiration for either wargaming or Role play gaming. Most of this issue's reviews are from Netflix this time. There is a mixture of documentaries, TV drama and film. These are not only entertaining to watch but might just provide some inspiration for your gaming. We have selected items to watch from around the world this time and not just Asia.

## Documentaries

**Age of the Samurai** (Netflix, US/Canada) It takes place in feudal Japan from 1551 to 1616, during the final phase of the Sengoku period (The Age of Warring States), mainly the Azuchi–Momoyama period. It features reenactments of historical events and commentary by voice-over artist Hiro Kanagawa and historians Stephen Turnbull, David Spafford, Tomoko Kitagawa, Isaac Meyer and others. The story is about several powerful daimyo (warlords) who clash to unify Japan. Oda Nobunaga becomes head of the Oda clan upon the death of his father, but this causes problems with family members who compete for control.

When Nobunaga conquers central Japan, he causes a war with the powerful daimyo Takeda Shingen. As Nobunaga's ambitions grow, one of his generals,

Akechi Mitsuhide, becomes doubtful about his intentions and betrays him. Afterward, Toyotomi Hideyoshi becomes the de facto ruler of Japan. However, the young daimyo Date Masamune refuses to submit.

After Hideyoshi unified Japan, he plots to expand his reign to China. Due to costly logistical issues and strong opposition, the campaign gets stuck in Korea. During the final months of Hideyoshi's life, he appoints five regents to govern until his young son Hideyori is old enough to assume power. However, the daimyo Tokugawa Ieyasu challenges the status quo and campaigns victoriously against his opponents, becoming the shogun of Japan.

I found this a useful show to watch from a war gaming perspective, it provided me with enough information to start a Samurai game, as well as understand the period at a considerably basic level. This isn't an in-depth piece of research, it essentially skims the surface of the period, but it is entertaining to watch, and it a good starting point. If you want to learn more then you are going to have to dive into some serious reading.



**The Lost Pirate Kingdom** (Netflix, USA) is a 2021 docuseries released by Netflix. This historical drama portrays the rise and fall of the eponymous early-18th century pirate republic based in Nassau, Bahamas. The series begins in 1715, shortly after the close of the War of the Spanish Succession, which pitted England against Spain. England had waged the war on the cheap, resorting to the use of privateers rather than incurring the expense of fully funding the Royal Navy.

This was a fun and entertaining watch, that provides a good overview of the golden age of piracy. Surprisingly, it did make me want to dig out an old rule set I have, *Legends of the High Seas*, which is one of the better rules sets by Warhammer Historical. So, a future plan will be to build some pirate warbands, along with some British Naval landing parties. This series just like the *Age of Samurai* is a mix of talking head experts and dramatized sections. This made it very easy to watch and I managed to plow through 4 episodes in the first night.



## TV Drama

**Wolf** (Netflix, Turkey) is a six-part 2018 Turkish-language miniseries starring Ahu Türkpençe, Serkan Çayoğlu, and Emir Benderlioğlu. The plot revolves around the lives of Turkey's Police Special Operation Teams, covering several years of Turkish history beginning in 2014. Wolf are a special team composed of incredibly talented and brave police officers, founded under the Turkey General Directorate of Police. The big portion of the story is very consistent with the fight of Turkey against terrorist organizations in especially the last 10 Years. It is based on true actual events that happened in Turkey and continues to 2016 (Coup) The army / justice / police are being infiltrated by Gülenists a group who is responsible for the failed coup in 2016.

I quite enjoyed this, it's a good mixture of drama and action sequences. There's plenty of inspiration for modern combat gaming scenarios. It also made a change to watch a Turkish action drama rather than one set around the US military. It gave another perspective of modern military gaming, and I'm now considering building and painting a Wolf squad.



**King's War** (Netflix, China) also known as Legend of Chu and Han, is a Chinese television series based on the events in the Chu–Han Contention, an interregnum between the fall of the Qin dynasty and the founding of the Han dynasty.

The series is set during the final years of the chaotic Qin dynasty, and traces the origins of Liu Bang and Xiang Yu: one, a middle-aged hooligan who nonetheless has his personal charm; the other, a young grandson of a famous general of Chu during the Warring States and anxious to restore his destroyed kingdom. After the death of Qin Shihuang, Qin quickly descended into chaos, and the stage is set for the two men to rise to prominence, but ultimately, only one man can become the next emperor of China.

Anyone considering gaming this period of Chinese history, then this is definitely a series you should watch, as it provides a flavour of the period and will most likely give you some gaming inspiration. As with most Chinese period TV shows it's well made, with enough drama and action to make an entertaining watch.



**Sisyphus: The Myth** (Netflix, Korea) tells the story of a genius engineer named Han Tae-sul (Cho Seung-woo), who tries to uncover the truth behind his older brother's death, and a mysterious woman called Gang Seo-hae (Park Shin-hye), who travels back in time to



help him save the world from imminent danger. An unfathomable incident introduces a genius engineer to dangerous secrets of the world, and to a woman from the future whose come looking for him.

This is well written sci-fi drama, it contains plenty of drama, and it presents an interesting idea for a game set in our current timeline, but with protagonists from the future. It's definitely make a good backdrop for an RPG or a skirmish game with some RPG elements.

**Alice** (Netflix, Korea) In the year 2050, Alice (temporal agency) specializes in sending clients back through time to see dead loved ones to find peace and closure; they also police time incursions. Alice agents Yoon Tae-yi (Kim Hee-sun) and Yoo Min-hyuk (Kwak Si-yang) travelled to the year 1992 Seoul to search for The Book of Prophecy (a book that predicts the fates of certain people and end of time travel) and found it. However, Lee Se-hoon (Park In-soo), agent of the mysterious Teacher (rogue group that wants to continue manipulating time), found the young Tae-yi and murdered her father for the book. Before her father died, he gave the final page to little Tae-yi before her adult counterpart arrived.



Tae-yi and Min-hyuk acquired the book and had local police arrest Se-hoon. When Tae-yi realized she was pregnant, Min-hyuk (the father) encouraged Tae-yi to abort the child as time traveling (radiation) would cause serious defects. Tae-yi then disappeared with the book to carry her child.

Tae-yi would rename herself as Park Sun-young and single-handedly raised her son, Park Jin-gyeom (Joo Won). Born with Alexithymia, he has difficulty recognizing his own emotions and his classmates called him a psychopath. He unknowingly can manipulate time in life-and-death situations. In 2010, Jin-gyeom found his mother murdered and vowed to find her killer. Orphaned without a family, Detective Go Hyeon-seok (Kim Sang-ho) and classmate Kim Do-yeon (Lee Da-in) looked after him. By 2020, Jin-gyeom becomes a detective under Hyeon-seok and learns about time travelers, Alice, the Teacher, and the truth behind his mother's death.





**Sweet Tooth** (Netflix, USA) Ten years ago “The Great Crumble”, a virus, killed many people in the world and led to the mysterious emergence of hybrid babies born part human, part animal.

Unsure if hybrids are the cause or result of the virus, many humans fear and hunt them. Gus, a half-deer hybrid, lives in the wilderness with his father – who dies of the virus when Gus is nine years old. Gus discovers a box with what he believes is a picture of his mother in it buried by his father beneath a tree with the word Colorado written on it. A year after his father’s death, Gus sets a fire before deciding to leave to find his mother. The fire alerts nearby hunters to his location who try to murder Gus for sport. The hunters are visibly surprised Gus can speak and are soon killed by Tommy Jepperd, a lone traveller, who tries to leave Gus behind. Instead, Gus follows Jepperd, insisting he escort him to his mother in Colorado. Jepperd resists, but still protects Gus as he won’t leave him alone.

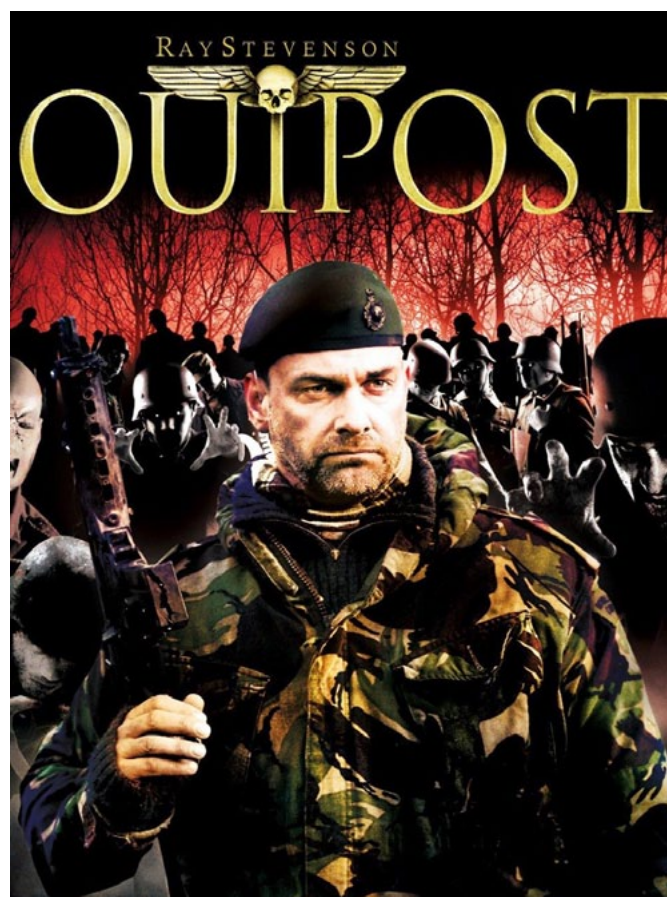
Together, they set out on an extraordinary adventure across what is left of America in search of answers—about Gus’ origins, Jepperd’s past, and the true meaning of home. But their story is full of unexpected allies and enemies, and Gus quickly learns the lush, dangerous world outside the forest is more complex than he ever could have imagined.

This TV show is based on a comic book series, which means there is a really good story to work from and it shows. The series was really well produced, with some excellent characters. It’s a post-apocalyptic setting which has plenty of scope for both RPG games and skirmish gaming. In the first 8 episodes we’re introduced to the main players and factions, this means there is definitely the opportunity to build a skirmish game around the show.



**Tribes of Europa** (Netflix, Germany) is a German Sci-fi series set in 2074, three siblings set out to change the fate of Europe after a global catastrophe causes the continent to fracture into dystopian warring tribal microstates who vie for dominance over other states. The siblings get caught up in the conflict when they come into possession of a mysterious cube. In the wake of a mysterious global disaster, war rages between the Tribes that have emerged from the wreckage of Europe. Three siblings from the peaceful Origine tribe are separated and forced to forge their own paths.

This has potential for a post apocalypse inspired game, building warbands to fight for territory and survival in ruined Europe. I felt it also made a change for a post apocalypse show set in Europe rather than the US. There are plenty of rule systems out there in which you use to recreate the show on the tabletop. As a TV show I was pleasantly surprised at how good it was, though my only criticism was it was too short, there could have been more episodes.



## Films

**Outpost** (Netflix, UK) is a 2008 British horror film about a rough group of experienced mercenaries who find themselves fighting for their lives after being hired to take a mysterious businessman into the woods to locate a World War II-era military bunker.

In a seedy bar in a town ravaged by war, scientist, and businessman Hunt (Julian Wadham) hires former Royal Marine turned mercenary D.C. (Ray Stevenson) to assemble a crack team of ex-soldiers – Prior (Richard Brake), Jordan (Paul Blair), Cotter (Enoch Frost), Voyteche (Julian Rivett), McKay (Michael Smiley) and Taktarov (Brett Fancy) – to protect him on a dangerous journey into no-man's land.

Their mission is to scope out an old military bunker in Eastern Europe, likely in Kosovo. Voyteche, one of the mercenaries, claims that there is nothing important located in the area they are heading to.

As the mercenaries approach their destination, they hear sounds of fighting off the instance; fighter jets pass overhead, and artillery can be heard as well. As they make their way through the woods an intense burst of static knocks out their radio communications. The mercenaries speculate as to what their job is and why they have been hired.

This is the usual horror Nazi zombie plot, though it's set in our current timeline. There are definitely some potential for scenarios involving a small group of mercs going up against Nazi zombies. The film is ok, it's reasonably well shot, and the acting is fine. It's not a great film but it is an entertaining watch, and does have some potential for gaming inspiration.



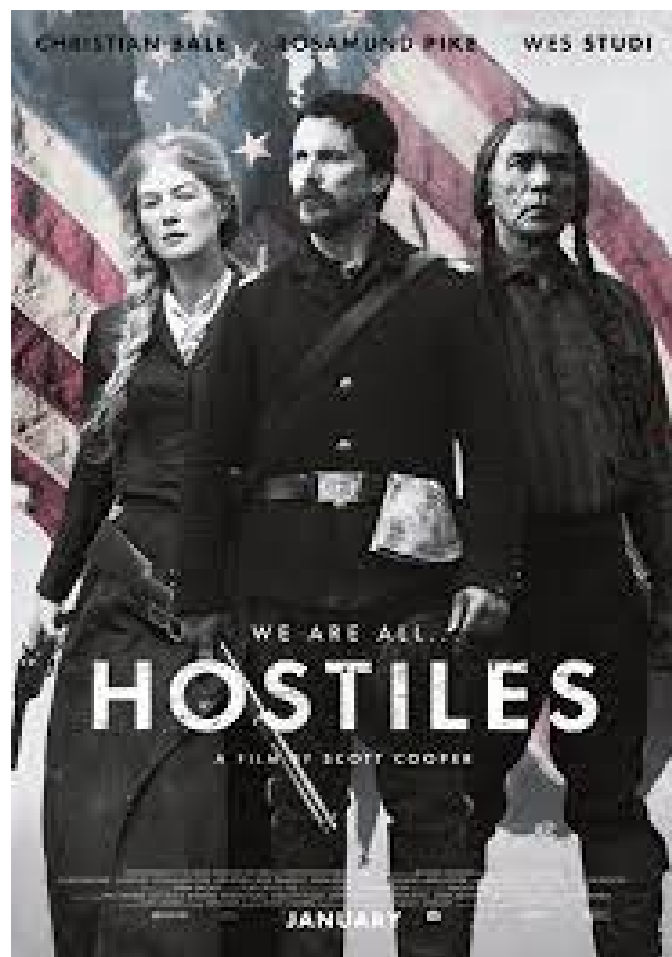
**Hostiles** (Netflix, USA) In 1892, a legendary Army Captain reluctantly agrees to escort a Cheyenne chief and his family through dangerous territory.

After nearly two decades of fighting the Cheyenne, the Apache, and the Comanche natives, the United States Cavalry Captain and war hero Joseph Blocker is ordered to escort the ailing Cheyenne chief, Yellow Hawk--his most despised enemy--to his ancestral home in Montana's Valley of the Bears. Nauseated with a baleful anger, Joseph's unwelcome final assignment is further complicated when widowed settler Rosalie Quaid is taken in by his band of soldiers.

Aggressive packs of marauding Comanches are still on the warpath and thirsty for blood, so can the seasoned Captain do his duty one last time?

I enjoyed this film, and I have to say I do like a good western. There are definitely some potential for gaming inspiration, especially with the new plastic miniatures from Great Escape Games. Christian Bale is good as the grizzled war veteran coming to end of his military career.

There is plenty of scope for a number of linked scenarios, which could be US Cavalry Vs Indians or a Posse led by a Marshall escorting a notorious outlaw to jail, whilst being pursued by the outlaw gang.





# TANKCRAFT SERIES

*Publisher; Pen and Sword*

JASON HUBBARD

Tiger 1 and Tiger 2 Tanks (German Army & Waffen-SS; The Last Battles in the East 1945)

Author: Dennis Oliver

Publisher: Pen & Sword

Tiger tanks were among the most-feared fighting vehicles of the Second World War, and they gained almost legendary status, yet they never fulfilled their potential because they were not produced in sufficient numbers and the tide the war had turned against the German army by the time they were introduced. Often, they were deployed in difficult circumstances and in defensive battles, struggling against the odds. Nowhere was this truer than in western Europe during the Allied advance across France and into Germany, and it is the Tigers of this phase of the war that Dennis Oliver portrays in his third volume on the Tiger in the TankCraft series.

He uses archive photos and extensively researched colour illustrations to examine the Tiger tanks and units of the German Army and Waffen-SS heavy panzer battalions that struggled to resist the onslaught of Allied armour and air attacks during the last days of the conflict.



A key section of his book displays available model kits and aftermarket products, complemented by a gallery of beautifully constructed and painted models in various scales. Technical details as well as modifications introduced during production and in the field are also examined providing everything the modeler needs to recreate an accurate representation of these historic tanks.

a review for a Chindit unit from Warlord. It didn't take long for me to start that force, and this book was one of the reasons.

I would recommend this for anyone wanting to wargame this particular campaign or the Pacific as a whole and make use of the images within as reference

material. I have been really impressed with this series of books, they have been great for referencing topics and I would say a very useful tool for wargamers.



Panther Medium Tank (IV.SS-PanzerKorps; Eastern Front 1944)

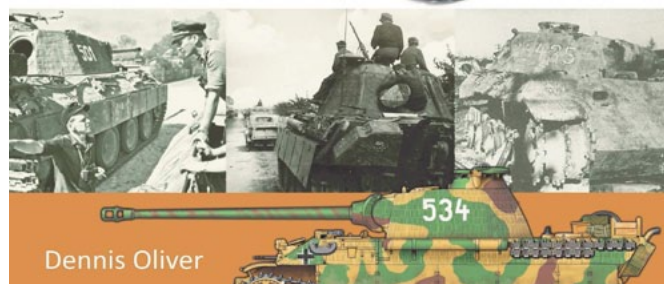
Author: Dennis Oliver

Publisher: Pen & Sword

During the summer of 1944 a series of massive Soviet offensives threatened to destroy the entire German army on the Eastern Front. As the Wehrmacht scrambled to hold what ground it could many formations simply disappeared, and the available armoured units were used to plug the gaps in the frontline. One of the most important elements of the defence was the newly raised IV.SS-Panzerkorps which contained the veteran Totenkopf and Wiking divisions. Although both were well equipped their real striking power lay in the battalion of Pzkwf V Panther tanks with which each was outfitted, perhaps the most effective armoured fighting vehicle produced by Germany during the Second World War.



In Dennis Oliver's latest volume in the TankCraft series he uses archive photos and extensively researched colour illustrations to examine the Panther battalions of these famous units that fought to hold back the Soviet advance during the last months of 1944. A key section of his book displays available model kits and aftermarket products, complemented by a gallery of beautifully constructed and painted models in various scales. Technical details as well as modifications introduced during production and in the field are also examined providing everything the modeler needs to recreate an accurate representation of these historic tanks.



Two more books from the Tank Craft Series, and as usual they're excellent books. The Tank Craft series is primarily aimed at the modelling community, yet they've become popular with war gamers and historians.

It's not surprising that wargamers have become fans of these books, each book contains a plethora of information about the tanks, and the battles they fought in.

There is also a selection of full colour plates which are perfect as a resource for modellers and wargamers for potential colour schemes when painting. Each book also contains a section that looks at the range of model kits available, and there are full colour photographs of finished models.

Even though this is a slim volume it is packed full of useful information, which makes these books a great resource that should be one every WW2 wargamers bookshelf.

Both books cover the last couple of years of the Second World War against the Russian army. The German military were in a fighting retreat, and these two volumes look at the beasts of the German military. The Tiger was one of the most feared tanks on the battlefield and has since become an iconic tank of WW2.

Every time we've reviewed one of these books, we've been highly impressed with them, and again these two are impressive volumes to the series. I can't recommend these enough for both modellers and war gamers.





## The Banana Wars - US intervention in Latin America

*The Banana Wars covers a period from 1898 through to 1934, whereby the USA intervened politically and militarily in Central America, the Caribbean and Northern South America. It was driven by the commercial interest of US run companies in the region, and the fact that America was becoming a fledgling superpower. It was effectively where the USA started its empire building that continued after the Second World War in other regions around the world.*

Most of the military interventions were carried out by the United States Marine Corp, with support from Naval gunfire and Army troops were also utilized. The Marine Corp developed a manual based on the experiences of fighting these interventions entitled, *The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars*. This became the main doctrine for counter insurgency until the lessons learnt from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, when a new manual was produced entitled *Counter Insurgency*.



This was about the US advancing its economic, political and military strength to maintain its sphere of influence in the region. With control of the Panama Canal in 1914, it was able to promote international trade and project its own naval power into Asia. The USA was on the move and looking to become a global strength economically and as a military power.

One of the main outcomes for the US military during these interventions was that many commanders of WW2 gained some valuable experience serving during the Banana Wars.

**Panama:** U.S. interventions in the isthmus go back to the 1846 Mallarino–Bidlack Treaty and intensified after the so-called Watermelon Riot of 1856. In 1885 US military intervention gained a mandate with the construction of the Panama Canal. The building process collapsed in bankruptcy, mismanagement, and disease in 1889, but resumed in the 20th century. In 1903, Panama seceded from the Republic of Colombia, backed by the U.S. government, during the Thousand Days' War. The Hay–Pauncefote Treaty allowed the US to construct and control the Panama Canal. In 1903 the United States established sovereignty over a Panama Canal Zone.



**Spanish American War:** U.S. forces seized Cuba and Puerto Rico from Spain in 1898. The end of the Spanish American War led to the start of Banana Wars. Occupations.

**Cuba:** Intermittent 1899–1922 In December 1899, U.S. president William McKinley declared Leonard Wood, a United States Army general, to have supreme power in Cuba. The U.S. conquered Cuba from the Spanish Empire. It was occupied by the U.S. from 1898 to 1902 under Wood as its military governor, and again from 1906 to 1909, 1912, and 1917 to 1922, subject to the terms of the Cuban American Treaty of Relations (1903) until 1934. In 1903 the US took a permanent lease on the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base.

**Nicaragua:** 1912–1933 Occupied by the U.S. almost continuously from 1912 to 1933, after intermittent landings and naval bombardments in the prior decades. The U.S. had troops in Nicaragua to prevent its leaders from creating conflicts with U.S. interests in the country. The bluejackets and marines were there for about 15 years. The U.S. claimed it wanted Nicaragua to elect “good men”, who would support U.S. interests.



**Haiti:** 1915–1934 occupied by the U.S. from 1915–1934, which led to the creation of a new Haitian constitution in 1917 that instituted changes that included an end to the prior ban on land ownership by non-Haitians. This period included the First and Second Caco Wars.

**Dominican Republic:** 1916–1924 Action in 1903, 1904 (the Santo Domingo Affair), and 1914 (Naval forces engaged in battles in the city of Santo Domingo); occupied by the U.S. from 1916 to 1924.

**Honduras:** Intermittent 1903–1925 The United Fruit Company and Standard Fruit Company dominated the country's key banana export sector and associated land holdings and railways, saw insertion of American troops in 1903, 1907, 1911, 1912, 1919, 1924 and 1925.

**Mexico:** 1914, 1916–1917 U.S. military involvements with Mexico in this period had the same general commercial and political causes but stand as a special case. The Americans conducted the Border War with Mexico from 1910–1919 for additional reasons: to control the flow of immigrants and refugees from revolutionary Mexico (Pacíficos), and to counter rebel raids into U.S. territory. The 1914 U.S. occupation of Veracruz, however, was an exercise of armed influence, not an issue of border integrity; it was aimed at cutting off the supplies of German munitions to the government of Mexican leader Victoriano Huerta, which U.S. President Woodrow Wilson refused to recognize.

In the years prior to WW1, the U.S. was also alert to the regional balance of power against Germany. The Germans were actively arming and advising the Mexicans, as shown by the 1914 SS Ypiranga arms-shipping incident, German saboteur Lothar Witzke's base in Mexico City, the 1917 Zimmermann Telegram and the German advisors present during the 1918 Battle of Ambos Nogales. Only twice during the Mexican Revolution did the U.S. military occupy Mexico: during the temporary occupation of Veracruz in 1914 and between 1916 and 1917, when U.S. General John Pershing led U.S.





Army forces on a nationwide search for Pancho Villa. One of the most decorated US soldiers during the Banana Wars was Smedley Butler, Major General USMC: nicknamed "Maverick Marine", who saw action in Honduras in 1903, served in Nicaragua enforcing American policy from 1909 to 1912, was awarded the Medal of Honor for his role in Veracruz in 1914, and a second Medal of Honor for bravery in Haiti in 1915.

After his forced retirement for making reckless statements, Smedley made a career of speaking to left-wing groups denouncing capitalism. His standard speech after 1933 was titled *War is a Racket*, where he denounced the role, he had played, describing himself as "a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers...a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism."



"I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped

purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested."

The Banana Wars came to an end in 1934 when President Franklin Roosevelt decided to withdraw troops for Haiti. He also announced a Good Neighbour policy which would mean that US actions and policy would take a softer approach. These interventions only increased suspicion and distrust of America, some of which still lingers today.

The interventions and exploitation carried out by the US government and companies harmed Latin American countries and their ability to grow and develop. A lot of money, capital and resources were siphoned out of the region during this period, this led to a lack of economic advancement. This can be seen in many of the countries that were affected by these interventions today.

This would make a good island/country hopping campaign trying to control a region either the historical region or taking the idea and dropping it in to a fantasy and Science-fiction setting. Players to try to control and capture as much of an area as possible.

As a historic wargame campaign this would be a small arm actions rather than full scale with armour, support would come as light artillery, armoured cars at best.

The attackers would be better equipped than those defending, but you could give them advantages for being on home soil and knowing the terrain. Some scenarios could be based around guerrilla style tactics from the defenders like ambushing convoys.

The US troops would have some veterans from the Spanish-American war, but on both sides, infantry should be regular or green troops, though the defenders should also field irregular units. On beach landing the US side would get artillery support from naval vessels, maybe on first turn they are allowed one round of gun support, prior to landing on the beach.

There is plenty of scope for a number of small campaigns set during this period. A perfect set of rules are *A World Aflame* (Interwar Wargame Rules 1918-39) from Osprey Wargames.

# North Vietnam's 1972 Easter Offensive

*Author: Stephen Emerson*

*Publisher: Pen and Sword*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

By the end of 1971, in what Hanoi called the American War and at the height of the Cold War, the fighting had dragged on for eight years with neither side gaining a decisive advantage on the battlefield and talks in Paris to the end of the war were going nowhere. While the United States was steadily drawing down its ground forces in South Vietnam, Washington was also engaging in a grand effort to build up and strengthen Saigon's armed forces to the point of self-sufficiency. Not only had the ranks of Saigon's forces swelled in recent years, but they were now being equipped and trained to use the latest American military equipment. Perhaps now was the time for Hanoi to take one last gamble before it was too late.

With the rumble of men and mechanized equipment breaking the early morning silence, some 40,000 North Vietnamese troops advanced across the demilitarized zone into South Vietnam on March 30, 1972, in what would become the largest conventional attack of the war. Ill-prepared and poorly led, South Vietnamese troops in the far north were quickly routed in the face of the ensuing onslaught.

Likewise, coordinated attacks across the Cambodian border northwest of Saigon and into the central highlands in the coming weeks gained steam and in due course as many as 200,000 men along with T-54/55 main battle tanks, 130mm towed artillery, ZSU-57 self-propelled ant-aircraft guns, and hundreds of trucks and armored personnel carriers were engaged across three battlefronts. Soon Saigon's beleaguered forces were being pushed to the brink of defeat in what appeared to be the end for the Thieu government.

Ultimately, however, the timely and massive intervention by U.S. and South Vietnamese air power, along with the bravery of some South Vietnamese commanders and their American advisers saved the day. Hanoi's gamble had failed and, in its wake, lay up to 100,000 dead and South Vietnamese roads littered with the smoldering wrecks of North Vietnamese military equipment. Moreover, it would be another three years before the North had recovered enough to try again.



We've reviewed a couple of the books from the Cold War series by Pen and Sword, they've all been well written and give a great overview of the subject matter. This book is no different from other books in the series, they are an excellent starting point before diving into a more in-depth read if you want to. They're nice slim volumes that fit easily on your bookshelf, easy to read and are well illustrated throughout.

The author has done a very good job of describing all the events and action that takes place during this offensive. This book provides an overview of the offensive, describing the units involved and the action they took. It's a very good jumping off point for anyone interested in researching this period in history or for those looking to war game the Vietnam War.

I enjoyed the book immensely as my knowledge about the war doesn't really stretch beyond Hollywood films set in this conflict. I'll be honest and go as far as to say that I didn't realize there were tank actions in Vietnam. My only view of the war was what films depicted which were generally small-scale actions in the jungle between infantry units. So, it was a pleasure to learn something new about the conflict.





## Small doll is unlikely hit at Tank Museum's WW2 exhibition

A small china doll has become an unlikely hit in the Tank Museum's new WW2 exhibition – because of her astonishing story of survival.

Little Audrey is just five inches tall, and the delicate doll is wearing a bouffant dress and clutching a wide-brimmed hat.

She had been given to Lionel 'Bill' Bellamy by his then girlfriend Audrey before he set out for Normandy in 1944.

He had joined the Royal Armoured Corps in 1941 and served with the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars through the war, becoming decorated for his heroism.

After crossing the channel after D-Day he found the doll in his kit and decided there and then to have her as his mascot.

Little Audrey was adopted by the troop 'without question' and Bellamy renamed his tank from Abbot of Chantry to 'Little Audrey, Abbess of Chantry'.

He attached the doll to the Cromwell tank's searchlight to the right of the turret and she became a good luck charm – and they needed her.

Fierce fighting followed in numerous battles and incredibly Little Audrey remained, untouched by enemy fire.



Then in one attack in Holland Little Audrey was knocked from her position by a branch as the tank passed through a hedgerow.

Astonishingly, so loved was Audrey that the troop of three tanks stopped and another troop leader leapt from his tank, into the open and at great risk, to retrieve her.

Bellamy later wrote: "As I was about to give the signal to move, I saw Sergeant Bill Pritchard leap out of his tank, he rushed back to the hedgerow, picked up Audrey, clambered on the back of my tank, handed her to me and shouted 'I'm not going without her!'"

"I knew that she had become a very much-loved mascot, but until that moment I hadn't realised the full extent of her role!"

David Willey, Curator of the Tank Museum in Bovington, Dorset, said: "Sometimes it doesn't take an object as big as a tank to tell a powerful story.

"Here we have a small delicate object, it's amazing that she survived at all because she is porcelain and could have been so easily broken.



"Bill's family were astonishingly generous to loan her to us for the duration of our exhibition, World War Two: War Stories.

"To see the doll alongside the huge tanks is perhaps a little unexpected but the aim of our new displays is to bring veteran stories to the public, humanising, personalising the stories. Audrey does just that.

"Bill visited the museum on a number of occasions, depositing with us an account of his incredible war service. He later published his war memoir *Troop Leader* to wide acclaim.

"After Normandy Bill fought the dangerous but retreating Germans through France, Belgium and Holland. He even got to Berlin where he managed to wander around the Reichstag and take some souvenirs.



"During the fighting, with Audrey at his side, Bill was wounded in the head, but after a few stitches remained at his post.

"He also managed to drag a number of survivors from two armoured cars that he saw being hit by enemy fire, right under the noses of the Germans.

"He thought the Germans could see him and knowing he was trying to rescue wounded men let him carry on unmolested.

"Then in November 1944 he came under small arms, mortar and artillery fire, so he engaged the enemy posts and took out three of them.

"Machine gun bullets hitting his tank caused molten lead to splatter in his face.

"He became aware that there was something different with his tank – it was not made of proper armour plate and was only mild steel training tank.

"He was offered a new one but being lighter his tank was fast – and he had lucky Audrey with him, so he stuck with it.

"Later he drove over a minefield, miraculously missing all the lethal ordnance and on another occasion, he almost burned to death when petrol ignited and set his bedding on fire, but he managed to get himself and his crew to safety.

"He then discovered his beret had two bullet holes in it. Proof perhaps that Little Audrey was keeping him from meeting his maker. Bill had a strong faith and he said it was a great comfort to him.

"Bellamy was awarded the Military Cross by Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery himself in a ceremony in March 1945 and he stayed in the army until 1955 and then had a successful business career.

"He split up with his girlfriend Audrey but kept his good luck Audrey doll. He went on to marry and have four children, with son Andrew following him into the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars.

"His memoir is one of the best books to come from someone who served in tanks.

"Audrey was present through all his remarkable military service and that Bill kept her until he passed away in 2009 shows how much he loved her."

The exhibition is now open and runs until further notice.



# Balm Monster

A short story set in the world of Brutality

Scott Wainwright



*Ishtar was once the goddess of violent war and sexual love, murder and birth. Science and other religions were a cancer that festered unseen until it was too late. Fueled by prayer and belief, the Old Gods could no longer exist in our dimension and were recalled back to the Ether Realm. While other Gods might be resigned to defeat, Ishtar devised a plan to regain her once great power. Forming a secret pocket dimension called the Brutal Realm, she began plucking people from all times and places and imprisoning them. Androids, wizards, aliens, and monsters all struggled in the name of Ishtar. They were forced to fight, pray, and fornicate in her name, all the while trickling new power to their captor. As time went on, the Brutal began expanding, with new land added, cities rising, and larger factions forming. Her prisoners are caught in a never-ending cycle of death and rebirth, where even death is no escape. This is but a glimpse of the full lore, the rest of which can be found in the Brutality Skirmish Wargame Rulebook. [www.brutalityskirmishwargame.com](http://www.brutalityskirmishwargame.com)*

Warmth was a small Narrows town like the others of its kind dotted throughout the Brutal Realm. Small and tightly knit, Narrow's townsfolk were good and honest people who banded together to stay on the "straight and narrow". Life was peaceful until the day the White Skulls attacked.

Balm huddled quietly in the closet of her hut and rocked gently to contain the storm inside her. She could hear the gunfire and cries of pain outside, they were closing in.

Balm, squeezed her eyes shut, using the memories of happier times in Warmth to canvas over the nightmare raging beyond her door. For a few blissful moments she was back, a few months ago when things were good. The murmur of friendly chatter and the clanking of plates surrounded her as she took a seat at the long table among dozens of her neighbors. Horns passed her a plate of mashed roots; his massive gray hand dwarfed the plate as he smiled down at her. Balm reached up for the plate and he moved it. As she tried to grasp it again, he moved it a second time, a fiendish grin spreading across his face.

"Come now Balm, I'm trying to give this to you. Stop playing around!" They both started laughing as he kept the plate just out of her reach. She anticipated his next move but hit the platter and was promptly covered in goopy tan paste. Their roar of laughter drowned out the objections about wasting food from others nearby. Horns fell off his bench with a thud and Balm was crying in between laughing shudders.

Someone screamed outside and Balm found herself back in the closet as the memory evaporated. She felt movement and found that she couldn't stop her hand from shaking. It was going to happen, she knew this.

The thought of having to leave this place afterward crushed her. She had finally found a home with real friends, but the tide of violence rising in her bashed against her bulkheads. She gripped her necklace tightly and prayed to her Grandmother Rulani for the strength to hold it back. The oily voice in the back of her mind dripped little words.

Let  
Me  
Out



She once again found refuge in happier times. She remembered standing in her hut pressing juices from different herbs to process into tonics while humming softly. There was a commotion outside just before Horns burst through her door, dirty and bleeding.

On each shoulder he carried one of the Twins whose limbs dangled with his every move. Behind him Flower rushed in, her fur and blouse splattered with blood. "Ambush. They're hurt bad, Balm! You gotta fix 'em!" Flower blurted out while Horns set both limp Twins down on the floor. Their red skin now faded to pastel and their shirts were soaked in purple gore. Balm tore open their shirts and checked the extent of their wounds. One had a jagged shard of metal protruding from his chest, the other's arm was shredded and slick with blood. That was the town of Warmth's first encounter with the White Skulls. The watchtower scouts had reported lurkers in the distance for a couple days, which was always cause for concern.

Flower and Balm worked feverishly to remove shrapnel, staunch the squirting, and stabilize the Twins. Flower had been the acting doctor in Warmth before Balm had arrived, though her passion was the garden and she was happy to retreat to the soil. Two hours

later the women were stained all over and exhausted. Balm's tonics had done their job and they could already see the ragged slices start to shrink under the stitches. The Twins would make it just fine. Flower and Balm laid beside each other on the floor, panting and wet with sweat. After a while Flower turned to Balm and stuck out her little finger, which Balm pressed against with her little finger. A gesture from Flower's home dimension that was an act of solidarity.

"I thank Ishtar for you, Balm. You are a blessing on our town."

Something began bashing against the door of her hut just before those words of memory cut Balm for what was about to come. She was trembling now, teeth clacking together as a bead of sweat rolled down her temple. After another strike, the entrance door caved in and Balm heard heavy footfalls in her room. Her breathing was rapid, she knew it was coming like a wave of fire cresting over her. Her last words were "Rulani forgive--"



Horns staggered through the burning town with one powerful leg dragging behind him, now home to a sword wound that had chipped the bone. His yellow eyes darted to each corner and alley for danger as he made his way to Balm's hut. He had sworn to protect her if the White Skulls made their move on the town, and he was going to keep his promise. He'd died twice already today, but there was no time to cry about it. The White Skulls had breached the outer wall with explosives an hour ago before the courtyard and streets ran muddy with viscera. Horns was almost there, weaving in between the screams and dancing flames.

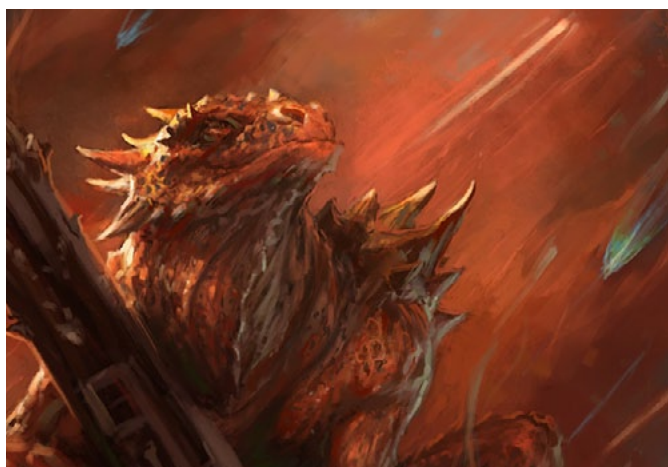
A White Skull leapt from a rooftop, bloody spear overhead. Even gravely wounded, Horns parried the blow with a horn and finished the encounter by twisting the man's head clean off.



He was mere steps from Balm's home when a severed arm flew across the street and smacked against a neighboring building. He stopped; eyes wide. A White Skull fell backwards out of the door with a naked Balm on top of him, mouth clamped on his neck. She jerked her back and tore out his throat, painting both of them in blood. Sinew and globules of flesh hung from her lips as her pinhole pupils landed on Horns

He was awestruck, his brain couldn't make sense of what he saw. She was naked and greasy with bodily fluids; her hair was spotted with bits of lung and skull fragments. This couldn't be. He was suddenly skidding on his back in the dirt, Balm was all he could see. She sunk her fingers in his eye sockets and split his skull in two with a force that wasn't possible.

Balm screamed inside her mind from behind the windows of her eyes. Not again. This was a nightmare she couldn't wake from; she couldn't turn away.



She watched her body drink the jelly from Horn's skull before ripping the arms off a White Skull and rubbed her face in the wounds as the White Skull screamed. Balm could feel everything, the wildfire of rage burning from the Other, the chunks of people slide down her throat. Three more White Skulls crushed or shredded, the Other squeezed the intestines from one of them over her head. It basked in the warm juices washing over them as a bullet tore through their leg.

Incensed, Balm's body turned and sprinted on all fours before leaping onto a wounded Flower. Immune to pain, the Other smashed Flower's body against the wall, Balm's friend wheezed as she looked up at her friend's dripping naked body. Balm would never forget the shock on Flower's face as she realized who was biting off her fingers. Flower didn't even fight back, as her brain couldn't make sense of the situation.

It only took three stomps to crush her ribcage, splintered ribs protruding through the skin like timbers of a collapsed home. Balm knew that eventually the Other would have its fill of violence and retreat to chew on the memories of the carnage. Then she'd be in control again and she'd be expelled from Warmth. Or worse, punished for the heinous acts her body had committed against her loved ones.

If she could die, then the ritual would be complete. The ritual she undertook to save her village from the Other in her old life. The sacrifice she was willing to take for the sake of her community.

A while later, the blood loss of her bullet wound finally took over and her body fell in a crumple in the street. The ripped ear of a Twin dangled from her mouth as she hit the dirt. A moment later, her corpse disappeared in a white flash of light.

Balm awoke back in her bed; her room was greasy with carnage. She threw up the contents of her stomach all over her sheets and downed an elixir to dull her mind; to give her time to flee before remorse set in.

As Balm took a ragged final look back at Warmth aflame in the distance, she prayed again to her first victim.

Grandma Rulani, please forgive me.  
She disappeared into the night to find a new home.



# NAPOLEONIC WAR BOOKS

JASON HUBBARD

*Publisher; Pen and Sword*

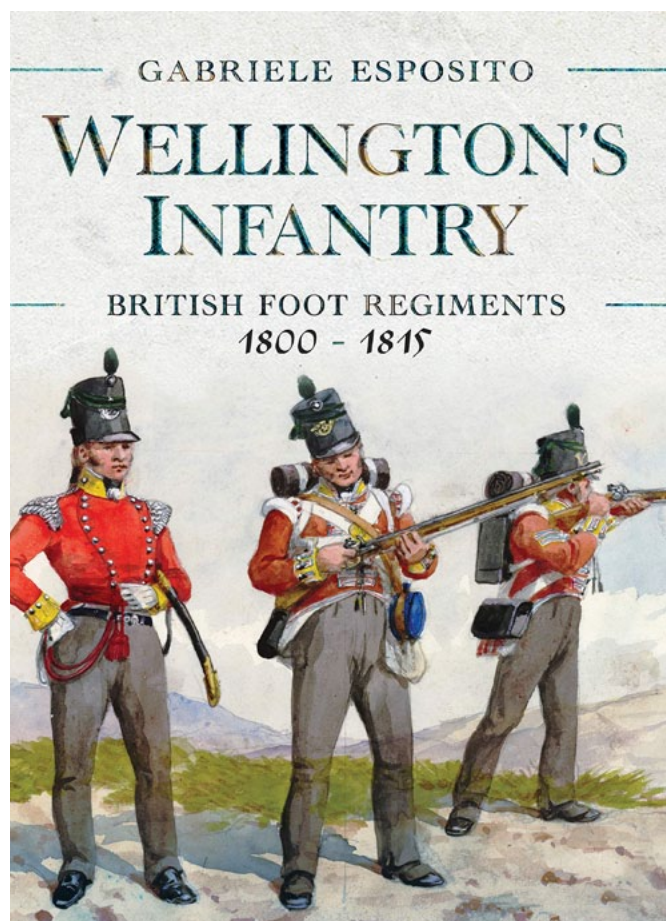
Wellington's Infantry (British Foot Regiments 1800-15)

Author: Gabrielle Esposito

Publisher: Pend & Sword

The period covered in this book is one of the most famed and glorious for the British Army and the infantry were its backbone. Gabriele Esposito examines how the foot regiments were reformed and evolved to absorb the lessons of defeat in America and setbacks elsewhere to become the efficient and dependable bedrock of victory in the Napoleonic Wars. He details the uniforms, equipment and weapons of the infantry, along with their organization and tactics.

Chapters are devoted to the Guards, the line regiments of foot, the Light Infantry and Rifles as well as Highland and Lowland Scots regiments. The author considers not only those units serving with Wellington in the Peninsular War and Waterloo Campaign, but all British infantry units, including those in Canada, the West Indies, India and elsewhere, not forgetting even the home defence Fencibles. Foreign units serving with the British army, most notably the King's German Legion, are also included.



This book is well illustrated throughout with colour images and plates, which makes it a great resource for those painting wargame or modelling miniatures for that period of history.

The author starts with an overview of the more well-known regiments from that period such as the Guards, Line infantry units and Scottish regiments, as well as the light infantry. There isn't anything new to bring to the table concerning these units. What makes this book an interesting read are the sections about the lesser-known regiments, such as the Fencible Regiments and their deployment during the Napoleonic War.



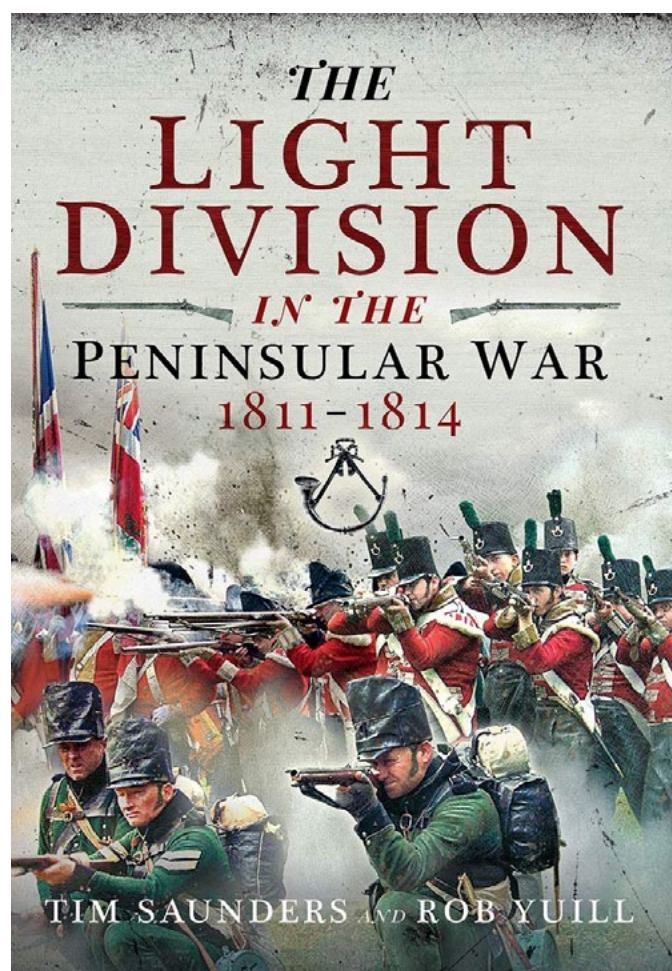


Though where this book excels aren't the well-known or lesser-known units from Britain but when the author covers the foreign units within the British army. The author covers units stationed in Canada, the West Indies, Africa and Australia. Gabrielle also covers the European based foreign regiments such as the Kings German Legion, Greek Light Infantry alongside the Malta regiments.

This isn't an in-depth look at the British Army from this period, but it is a good jumping off point for more detailed research. It does provide some excellent information for some of the more obscure units serving in the army, which may appeal to a wargamer looking to add some unusual flavour to their army.

It does provide some good resources for painting miniatures, which is always useful. Would I recommend this book, yes to anyone starting out in this period, as it's a great starting point? I'm not sure someone already well exposed to this period in military history will find it very useful, its probably an interesting read but I wouldn't rush out to purchase if you already have a well-stocked bookshelf of similar books.

Personally, I found it to be a very good read, and got me thinking about building some of the more obscure units, especially for skirmish gaming.



Wellington's Light Division in the Peninsular War  
Author Robert Burnham  
Publisher: Frontline Books

In February 1810, Wellington formed what became the most famous unit in the Peninsular War: The Light Division. Formed around the 43rd and 52nd Light Infantry and the 95th Rifles, the exploits of these three regiments are legendary. Over the next 50 months, the division would fight and win glory in almost every battle and siege of the Peninsular War.

Key to the understanding how the division achieved its fame is an understanding of their excellence and tradition that was established from its founding. It began on the border of Spain and Portugal where it served as a screen between Wellington's Army and the French. For six months while vastly outnumbered, it manned outposts, guarded fords and bridges, and fought numerous skirmishes. When it came time pull back from the border, the division endured a harrowing retreat with a relentless enemy at their heels. It was during this eventful year it developed an esprit-de-corps and a belief in its leaders and itself that was unrivalled in Wellington's Army.

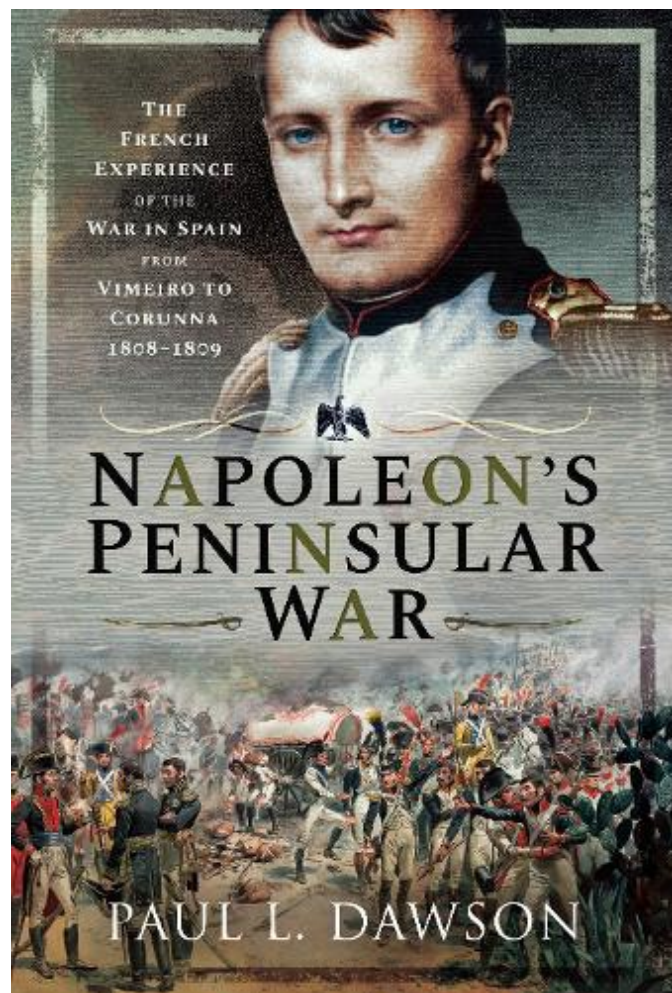
Wellington's Light Division in the Peninsular War uses over 100 primary sources to recount the numerous skirmishes, combats, and battles, as well as the hardships of a year of duty on the front lines. Many of these sources are from British and Portuguese archives and have never been published before. Others are from long-forgotten books published over 150 years ago. It is through the words of the officers and men who served with it that this major, and long-anticipated study of the first critical year of the Light Division is told.

At just shy of 500 pages this book is well researched and well written, it provides an in-depth look at the Light Division during the Peninsula War, whereas the previous book was a good jumping off point, then this book is where you should land. There are several precisely drawn maps of various location and battles throughout the book which are an invaluable resource for war gamers.

This is one of those books that is a good read for anyone with a passing interest in the subject and fancies learning more. Yet, this volume is something those wanting to go further in their research on the subject matter really should have on their shelf. Do you need some prior knowledge of the subject before jumping into this book, not really, it may be helpful in some areas but overall, the answer is no. You can pick this book up and dive straight in.

Where this book does well is the description of the “Petty War”, which were fought along the border between Spain and Portugal during 1810. The author has written four chapters around this period of the Peninsula campaign.

This is definitely a book I’d recommend to anyone looking at gaming the Napoleonic period especially the Peninsula Campaign, whether it’s to recreate the battles of the period or the adventures from the Richard Sharpe novels then this book will be a great resource.



#### Napoleon's Peninsular War

Author: Paul L Dawson

Publisher: Frontline Books

Memoirs of British soldiers who fought in the Peninsular War are commonplace and histories of the momentous campaigns and battles of Sir John Moore and Sir Arthur Wellesley, the future Duke of Wellington, can be numbered by the score. Yet surprisingly little has been published in English on their opponents, the French.

Using previously unseen material from the French army archives in Paris, which includes numerous memoirs that have not even been published in France, renowned historian Paul Dawson tells the story of the

early years of the Peninsular War as never before. Eyewitness accounts of the horrific Siege of Zaragoza, in which more than 50,000 soldiers and civilians were killed defending the city, and of the cataclysmic Spanish defeats at Medellin and Ocaña are interspersed with details of campaign life in the Iberian Peninsula and of struggling through the Galician mountains in pursuit of the British army marching to Corunna.

As well as the drama of the great battles and the ever-present fear of Spanish guerrillas – the knife in the back, the flash of steel in the dark – Paul Dawson draws on the writings of the French soldiers to examine the ordinary conscript's belief in the war they were fighting for their Emperor, Napoleon.

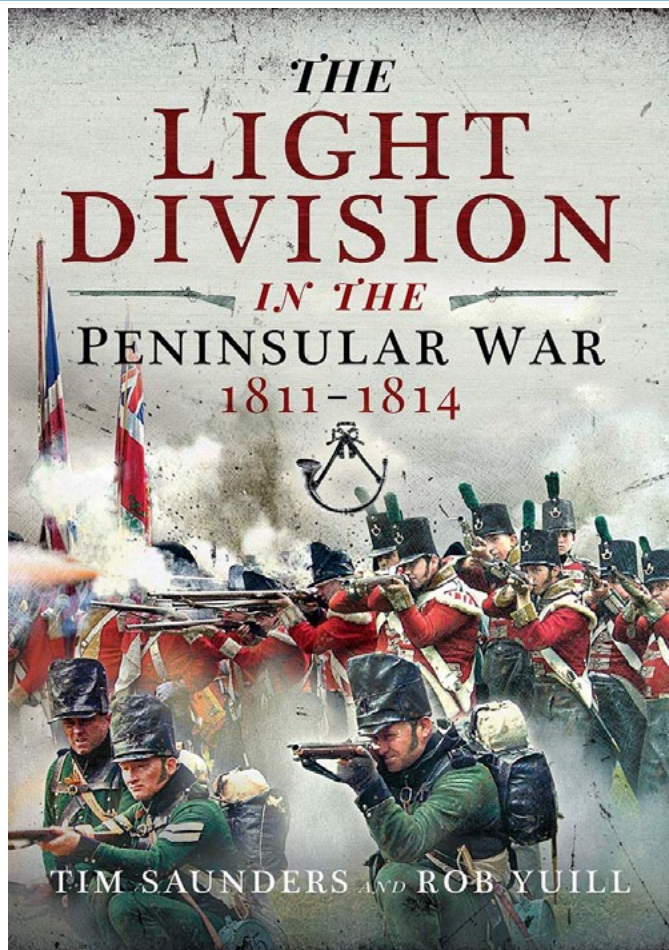
In this much-needed study of the Peninsular War from the French perspective, Paul Dawson has produced an unprecedented, yet vital addition to our understanding of the war in Iberia. Napoleon's Peninsular War is destined to become one of the classic accounts of this turbulent, yet endlessly fascinating era.

This book is for the historian, it's really not a great book for the war gamer. If you're a war gamer looking for a casual read for background material, then I'd suggest you don't pick this up. If, however you're closer to a historian and are looking for a really in-depth read then grab yourself a copy.

This is a comprehensive study of the Peninsula Campaign fought by the British, French and Portuguese. The author goes on to explain how chaotic the Spanish were at times, their organizational failures and support alongside some military campaigning are all fully explained by the author. The average reader may find that some of the sections written about the Spanish politics and conflicts to be a little hard work, but those who revel in this area of historical fact will find it fascinating.

This book provides an insight into political turmoil in Spain and the ravages of war being inflicted on the population. It's a fascinating read, if at times a little dry, it's definitely not a book for the faint hearted. As I said earlier it won't appeal to the average wargamer, but those who really like to dive deep into a period they're gaming in. Is it worth picking up, the short answer is yes and no, it really depends on how deep you want to go with your background reading? Is it a good book, that answer is a definite yes, it's well written and extremely well researched? It's just one of those books that won't appeal to everyone but to those it does, it's definitely a book that should be on your shelf.





The Light Division in the Peninsula War 1811-1814  
 Author: Tim Saunders & Rob Yuill  
 Publisher: Pen & Sword

By the middle of 1811, Brigadier General Robert Craufurd's Light Division was emerging as the elite of the Peninsular Army and Wellington was seeking opportunities to go over to the offensive, following the expulsion of Marshal Masséna from Portugal.

After a period of outpost duty for the Light Division on the familiar ground of the Spanish borders, Wellington seized 'the keys to Spain' in the epic sieges of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz. Still reeling from the loss of General Craufurd, 'The Division' led the army against Marshal Marmont and after a protracted period of marching and counter marching, the French were finally brought to battle at Salamanca.

As a result of King Joseph being driven out of Madrid, the French marshals united and in the autumn of 1812, the British were driven back to Ciudad Rodrigo in another gruelling retreat.

With news of Napoleon's disaster in Russia and with reinforcements from Britain, Wellington prepared his army to drive the French from the Peninsular. A lightening march across Spain to cut the Great Road found King Joseph and Marshal Jourdan at Vitoria and the resulting battle, in which the Light Division fought their way into

the heart of the French position, was a triumph of arms for Wellington's light troops.

The pursuit into the Pyrenees, had a sting in the tail when Marshal Soult mounted counter offensives in an attempt to relieve San Sebastian and Pamplona. Having thrown the French back and with the Sixth Coalition intact, the Light Division fought their way through the mountains and into Napoleon's France.

With the allies closing in on all sides, the French fought on into 1814 and the Light Bobs had further fighting before the spoils of peace in a war-weary France could be enjoyed.

The author has written this book in a very easy to read style, it has recollections from those who served during the Peninsula campaign taken from letters, reminiscences and memoirs. These are splattered amongst the authors well researched and written account of the Light Division.

The authors have managed to cover all the exploits of the division between 1811 and the end of the campaign in 1814. The book is well illustrated throughout with maps, photos and lithographs/paintings.

Where this book succeeds isn't the descriptions of the major battles the division was involved in, but the smaller actions and skirmishes, which include well written descriptions of the terrain.

I preferred this book over the other book on the same subject matter. I found this a much easier book to read, it's a book that you can sit down on a Sunday afternoon and blitz through a few chapters with ease.

This is alongside the first volume by the same authors is definitely a book that should be on your shelf if you're interested in the Napoleonic period. I've recently picked up the rule set from Osprey called Chosen Men, so these two books are a great resource for background information on Light Infantry regiments and where they fought during the campaign in Spain.

# Balkan Struggles

(A Century of Civil War, Invasion, Communism and Genocide)

*Author: Andrew Rawson*

*Publisher: Pen and Sword*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

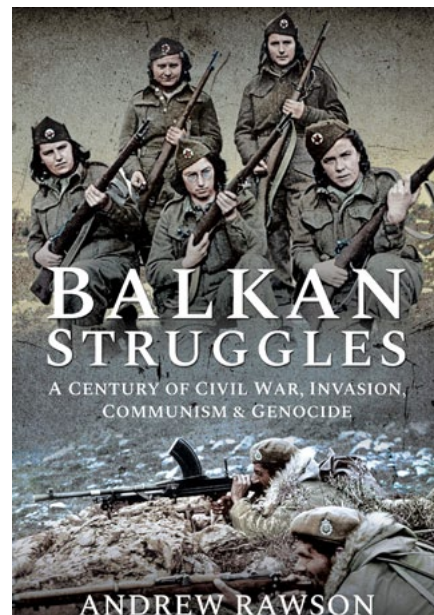
The Balkans witnessed several bloody conflicts during the twentieth century. New nations emerged in 1913, after 500 years of Ottoman rule, only for them to go to war just weeks later. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in June 1914 sparked the series of events that led to the Great War. Most of the belligerents would be drawn into the region, while the post-war border changes created tensions.

Italian designs on the Balkans resulted in the occupation of Albania in March 1939, but it failed to take control of Greece over the winter of 1940-41. A German blitzkrieg quickly defeated both Yugoslavia and Greece in the spring of 1941, and the population of both countries then suffered terribly as the occupying forces encouraged collaboration and punished resistance.

The area was rife with guerrilla activity, as monarchists, nationalists and communists fought each other as often as the occupying troops. This, in turn, led to communism sweeping across most of the region in the post-war years, while Greece was taken over by a fascist regime.

Communism eventually ended, but ethnic troubles resulted in a ten-year conflict across Yugoslavia. It would be divided into Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo, at the end of the bloodiest conflict in Europe since World War II.

The author has focused his research on the 20th Century which was a turbulent period in the history of the Balkans, with some recent conflicts spilling into genocide in the region. Andrew starts just prior to the first World War where events that started in the region would send Europe into a bloody World War. From there he takes us to the Nazi invasion of the region, which resulted in collaboration, occupation and eventually the end of the war. Post war didn't see the tensions dissipate as the rise of communism rose and all the problems that brought many people.



Finally, he ends with the more recent conflicts that have plagued the region such as the Bosnian War and the war in Kosovo just to name a couple. The author also covers some of the war crimes committed during these more recent conflicts.

It's a fascinating read about a region that has been plagued with terrible conflicts and genocide. I would recommend anyone with an interest in modern warfare take a read of this book. For those wargamers looking for a conflict to campaign in then the material around the two world wars will be a good jumping off point. I'm not sure the more recent conflicts will make a period to war-game. Though you could use some of the background for a hypothetical WW3 scenario.

I found the chapters that covered the two world wars of more interest than the more recent conflicts which were very brutal with many of those fighting committing war crimes. I suspect there is more for a historian in this book than a wargamer, but there are some useful information for anyone looking to run a campaign in the region in either the First or Second world war.



# Painting Moderns

I recently started a new project as part of On Tabletop's Spring Clean Challenge. I've had a load of modern miniatures gathering dust for some time, so I decided I should dust them off and get some paint on them.

A couple of years ago I picked up a load of modern infantry from various manufacturers but have done very little with. So, this year I plan to get them all finished. I purchased armed civilians, Chinese PLA, Private military contractors, US infantry (Mantic's Mars attack minis) and some insurgents. I also picked up a copy of Osprey's Black Ops rule book. Over the last couple of years, I have painted some of the minis but nowhere near as much as I should have. So, one of this year's projects is to get these painted for a future game.

## Chinese PLA

These are from Empress Miniatures, and I picked them up as it was different from other ranges that generally carried US, British and insurgents. I also had an idea to do a zombie game set in Asia. Now I'm unsure of what colour scheme to go with at the moment as there are plenty to choose from. Though I'm drawn to this one below, as it's







one of the few that isn't a digital camo pattern. These are from the Empress Miniatures range, and I have quite a few which I purchased via a Kickstarter some time ago. All of these are metal, some are single piece, and a few are in either two or three parts.

## US Infantry



I had a copy of Mantic's Mars Attack game, mainly for the miniatures, as I've never really played much of the game.

The US infantry in this set are really nice and rather than buy some new minis I decided to use these. Also, the terrain will come in handy along with some of the armed civilians.

Like the PLA a lot of the newer camo patterns are digital, which is a little to replicate on a 28mm figure, so I decided on a couple of possible patterns to use, like the one below. As stated, before these are from Mantic's Mars Attack game. These are single piece plastic and are quite nice.



## Private Military Contractors

In most modern conflicts there a number of PMCs so I've picked up a range of miniatures that will suffice as PMCs. These guys are the modern mercenary, though today they work for legitimate companies providing a range of security services.

These will probably be the easiest to paint as they're quite flexible in the clothing they wear. Many of the

PMC companies require them to wear a sort of uniform, which isn't strictly a military camo clothing but rather a military style and look. These are all metal and come from a variety of manufacturers. Most are single piece, apart from a couple.

## Civilian



Over the years I've collected a number of armed civilians for use in games such as Walking Dead, some of these I've manage to paint already. These aren't restricted by a colour scheme or camo pattern, so I can be quite flexible and creative when it comes to painting these miniatures. Like the PMCs these come from a wide variety of miniature companies and will either be metal or plastic.

## Previously Painted Miniatures

As I mentioned in previous earlier, I started this project awhile back and never completed it. Most of the miniatures have been sat unpainted for 2 or more years. I did make a start on them a couple of years ago, and then painted three US infantry last year, but that's as far as I got.

Some of these I may go back to and tidy up or in some cases I may strip and repaint if I have enough time.



## Painting the Chinese PLA

I've made a good start on the first squad; they've been base coated, and shade added ready for me to start the camo pattern.

The uniform was painted with Vallejo Russian Army Green. The webbing was done Zamdri Dust by GW, then washed with Agrax.



The skin tone was painted with a pale beige then washed with Rieklund shade.

The weapon and boots were painted in a dark grey then washed with Nuln oil.



## Painting the BMP 1

I was looking around Ebay for a suitable vehicle for the PLA, and I came across a seller who was selling some modern vehicles which included a BMP 1 and BMP 2.

The Chinese didn't use the BMP 2, but they did have BMP1's in service. Purchasing a BMP 1 would also mean I could use for a number of other forces such as Russian, alongside military units in the Middle East and Africa. The

seller had produced the vehicles on a 3D printer, so they were being sold at a reasonable price, in the case of the BMP 1 £6.

The BMP-1 is a Soviet amphibious tracked infantry fighting vehicle. BMP stands for Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty 1, meaning "infantry fighting vehicle, 1st serial model". The



BMP-1 was the first mass-produced infantry fighting vehicle (IFV) of the Soviet Union. It was called the M-1967, BMP and BMP-76PB by NATO before its correct designation was known.

China produced more than 3,000 Type 86s and vehicles based on it. 1,000 Type 86s were in service in 2003 and 2005. Around 1,000 are currently in service.

I undercoated the vehicle with Corax White from Games Workshop, before base coating using Vallejo US Field Drab.



The next step was to place blue tack on the model, so I could paint the camo pattern, which would be done us







The next step was to place blue tack on the model, so I could paint the camo pattern, which would be done using Vallejo Russian Uniform Green.

Once the camo pattern was done, the next stage was to paint the track and then finish with weathering and some detailing on the vehicle.



## Some Completed Minis

These are the first two from the East European/Russian Merc or PMCs I have.

The sniper looks like the bad guy from the film Behind Enemy Lines. So, I plan to paint him like that.



I went for a simple paint scheme on both and managed to get them both finished reasonably quickly.

These two minis are from Empress miniatures I believe, though I could be wrong. They were rather quickly painted up so I could use them in a quick game.

The plan is to use them as either Western special forces operators or PMCs. This will depend on the scenario I'm playing.

I'll continue to update this project in future issues.





# Military History of Late Rome 395-425

*Author: Ilkka Syv  ne*

*Publisher: Pen and Sword*

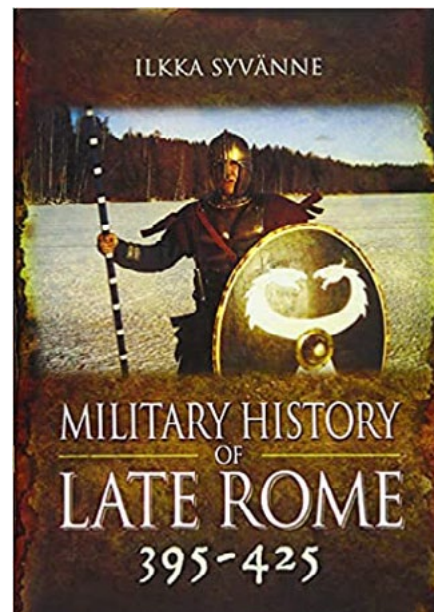
REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

This ambitious series gives the reader a comprehensive narrative of late Roman military history from 284-641. Each volume gives a detailed account of the changes in organization, equipment, strategy and tactics among both the Roman forces and her enemies in the relevant period, while also giving a detailed but accessible account of the campaigns and battles.

The Military History of Late Rome Volume 3 analyses in great detail the pivotal years of 395-425. It was then that the mighty Roman Empire faced the Great Migrations while being wrecked by civil wars. In 395 the task of defending the Roman Empire fell on the great generalissimo Stilicho. He faced a series of hostile bureaucrats, emperors, usurpers and foreign foes until he was killed in a conspiracy in 409. His death led to an event that shook up the Empire to its very core. The city of Rome fell to the Visigoths of Alaric in 410. The book shows why this happened and how and why the Germanic tribes were able to settle inside the borders of the Empire. This, however, is not the entire picture. In contrast to the West Romans, the East Romans survived the civil wars and faced the Germans, Huns and Persia successfully. Why it was so and why were the East Romans able to take control also of West Rome in 425?

This is the second book in the series by the author covering the Late Roman military, these are great books for any historian or wargamer. This book just like the previous volume are well written and extremely well researched. The book was very easy enjoyable read, packed with information on the military of this period.

This book covers all the events that led to the collapse of the Empire in the West. Which includes the period ruled by Stilicho, who managed to defeat all of Rome's enemies in battle until his death in 409. Then just a year later Rome is sacked by Alaric and the Visigoths, from this point until 425 the West part of the Roman Empire slowly collapsed.



One aspect I really enjoyed was the section on siege warfare which highlighted the equipment being utilized by the Roman army during this period. The book is over 300 pages and is illustrated including some colour images showcasing uniforms of the legionaries during this period.

These will be useful to the wargamer as they provide a good reference for painting late Roman figures. This is a great book for any wargamer thinking about diving into the Late Roman Period. It has plenty of information to get your teeth into. It's definitely one you should have on your shelf if you're interested in playing Late Roman armies.

# Blast from the Past

## Song of Blades & Heroes

Jason Hubbard

SBH is a skirmish game produced by Ganesha Games that can be played with a handful of fantasy miniatures I was first introduced to the game back in 2009. Currently in its fifth edition it was first published in 2007. In 2008 it was nominated for an Origins Award in the Best Miniature Rules category.

Since it was first published SBH has formed a very good following with a dedicated fan base. It uses D6 rule system that is very easy to pick up and play which makes it a great rule set for beginners. A game on average will last around 30-45 minutes, which is great for those with limited spare time on their hands.

The game uses 3 measuring sticks so there's no need to count any inches or centimetres, which speeds up the movement phase, as well as range combat. It's a fast game to play and it's possible to play a campaign in an evening, or afternoon. You can play with as little as 5 miniatures per side, though the maximum tends to be around 10. It can be played on a 3x3 board, and it works best with plenty of terrain on the board.

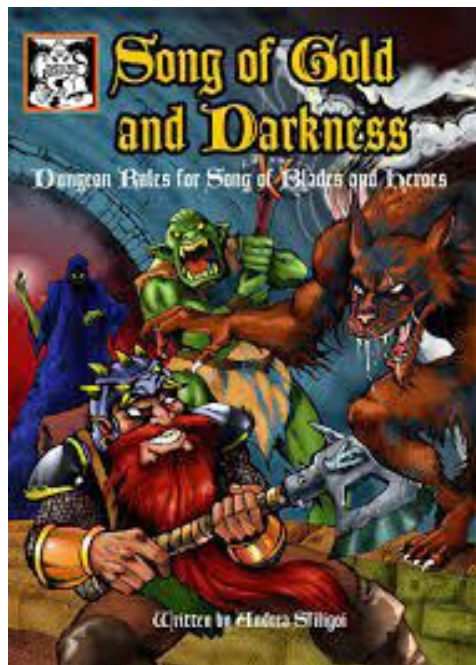
There are roughly 180 plus monsters and heroes included in the rules, with information to create your own as well. The mechanics will also work for



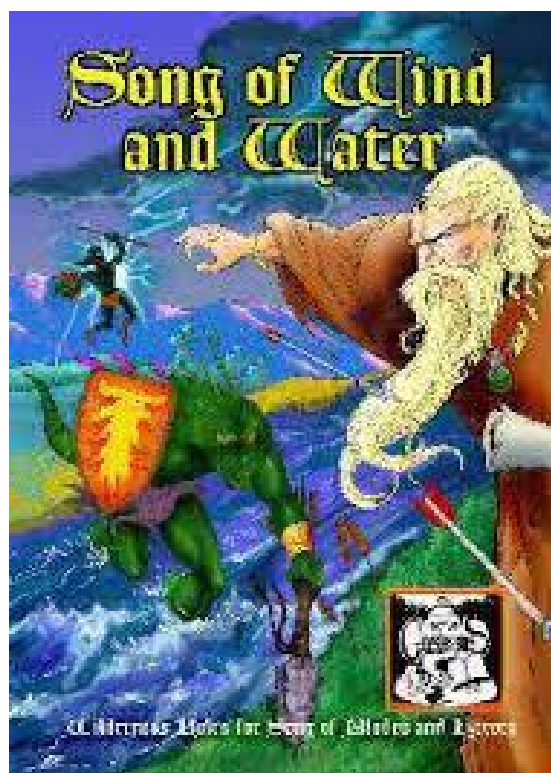


solo war gaming as well, which was why I dusted off the rule books during lockdown to grab a game or two.

In addition to the core rule books there have also been several supplements published that take game to underground, provide more advanced rules, extend the campaign rules in more detail as well as supplements for the Age of Arthur.

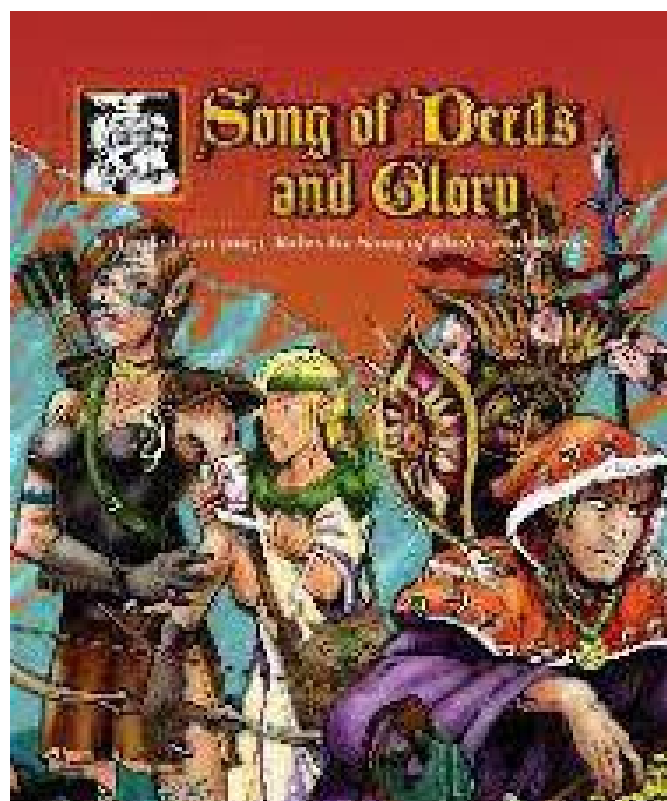


Song of Gold and Darkness was the first supplement and took your warbands below ground into the dungeons looking for treasure. It provided a plethora of new rules, over a hundred new monsters as well as new terrain types.



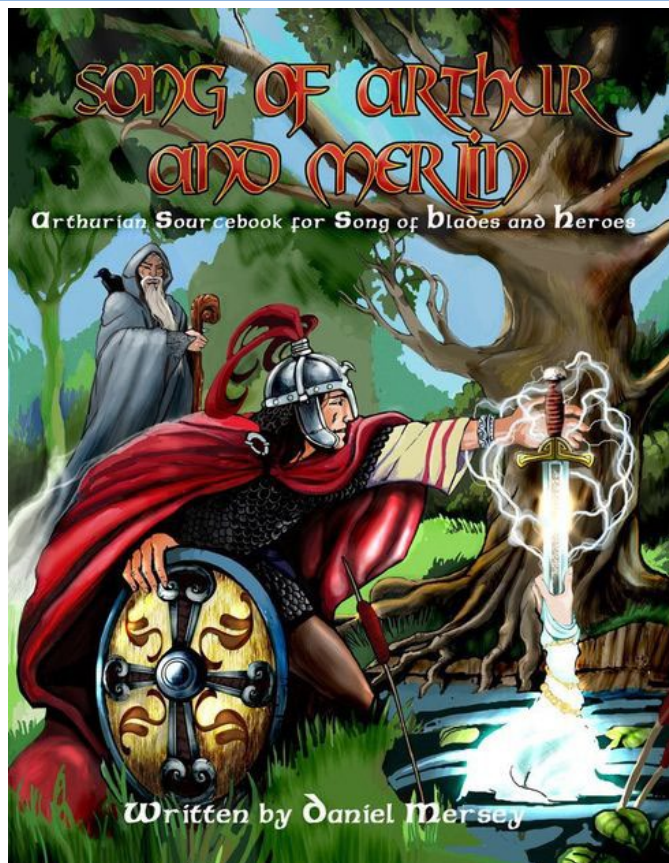
Each warband member utilises a few stats Points, Quality, Combat and Special Abilities. Points is how many points it costs to use that particular miniature Quality is the main stat used to roll against for actions. Combat is the number you add to a D6 roll when conducting Melee/ Ranged Combat, and Special Abilities would cover any Special Abilities that the character may have. It's that simple which is why it makes a great game to introduce wargaming to newbies, and for quick pick-up games when time is short. There is a list of modifiers for combat, though this isn't a long list.

Song of Wind and Water is the second supplement for SBH, and provides additional rules for fighting in the wilderness, along weather rules, new rules for terrain and a further 98 creatures to go up against.



Song of Deeds and Glory was the third supplement for the game. This expansion provided new rules and guidelines for running extended campaigns. It gave players the ability to carve out their own territory. It also included 36 new creatures, a bunch of new special rules as rules for boosting stats and learning new skills.

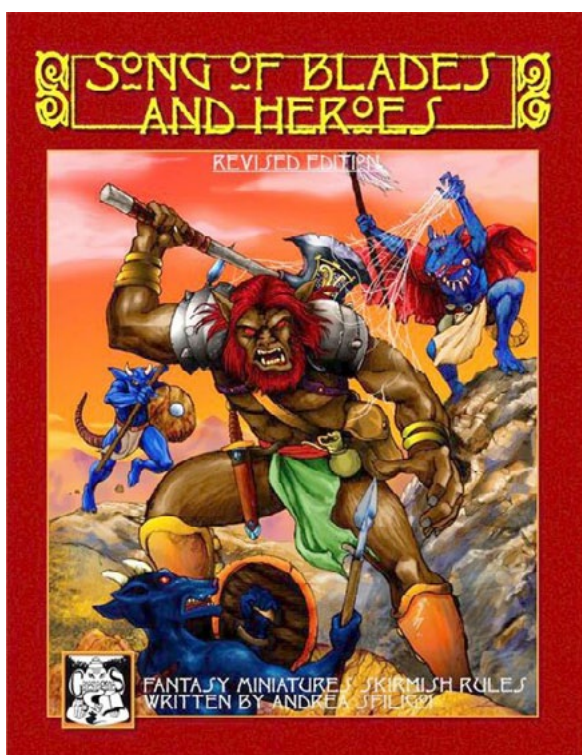
Song of Arthur and Merlin was a sourcebook for SBH, that allowed players to play and campaign in the Age of Arthur. It had three different ways to play the game. Hollywood Mode: This was the high fantasy shining knight in armour, with magic.



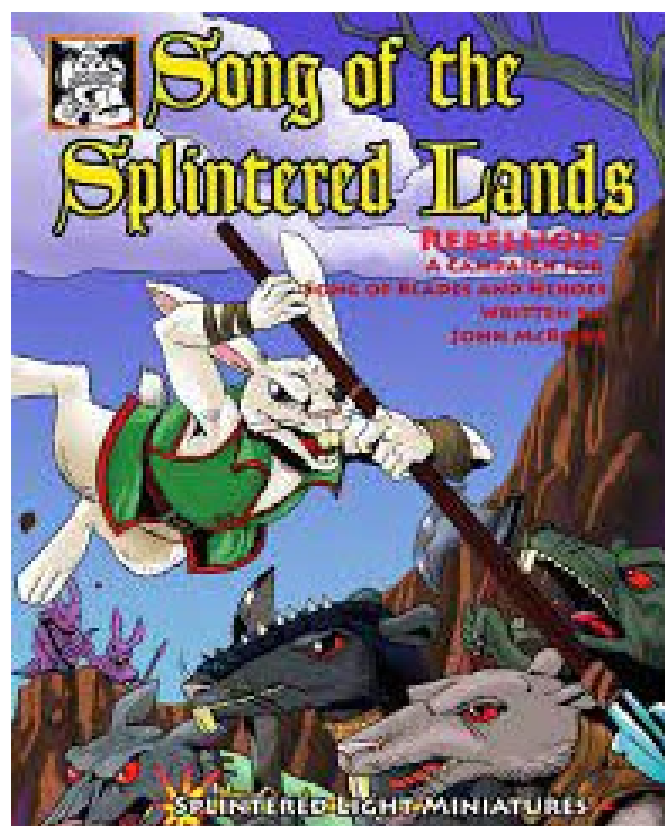
Celtic: This was the Celtic folklore version with magic, and legends.

Historical King: This was a dark age historical version with no magic, just dark and gritty end of Romano Britain period.

The sourcebook provided lists for magical and historical army warband lists.



There was another source book published called SONG OF THE SPLINTERED LANDS which is a stand-alone set of miniature rules based on and fully compatible with Song of Blades and Heroes fantasy miniature rules. It was set in an anamorphic world with animals battling goblins and dwarves.



This game really starts to breakdown once you go above 12-20 models per side. You can play it with more than 12 but it you will start to run into some issues. The game is built on an activation system whereby you activate each model, if you get two fails then your turn ends. This isn't much of an issue with a low model count, but it becomes one once you go beyond 12. Let's say you failed twice after only being able to activate 4 out of 20 models.

Then your opponent has a streak of luck with the dice and manages to activate nearly all of his 20 warriors, it this could actually cost you the game. I would suggest changing the rules to make this less of an issue by adding an additional failure, so instead of 2 fails before your turns ends make it 3 or 4 depending on the number of models each player has.

This is one of the best skirmish games on the market for simplicity and easy to learn, it was great when launched all those years ago and still is today. Every person I've introduced the game to has loved playing it, especially when most games last around 30 minutes.

<https://www.ganeshagames.net/>



# SOVIET T-62 (MAIN BATTLE TANK)

*Author: James Kinnear & Stephen L Sewell*

*Publisher: Osprey Publishing*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

The T-62 is one of the most widespread tanks used by the Soviets during the Cold War. Developed from the T-55, the T-62 enjoyed a long career in the Red Army and even into the early days of the reformed Russian Army. It was the principal tank used by Soviet forces in the Soviet-Afghan War and went on to see service with Russian forces in Chechnya and South Ossetia.

It has also been employed in almost every conflict in the Middle East and Africa from its introduction into service. It remains in service with many countries throughout the world and has seen a great deal of use in the Syrian Civil War.

Containing more than 400 stunning contemporary and modern photographs, and written by two experts on Soviet armour, this authoritative book tells the complete story of the T-62.

This is well researched book which spans the complete history of the tank from development to service in the Soviet military, and subsequent service for various armies around the world. The authors also cover the plethora of conflicts these tanks saw action in. The T-62 has enjoyed a long service in various armies around the world. There aren't many modern tanks that have managed to see action in as many conflicts over such a long military career. Most MBTs become redundant very quickly due to technological advancement, yet the T-62 was quite a versatile tank that managed to survive for such a lengthy period.

There are over 400 images in the book that boasts a very impressive page count of 224. It's been rammed with insightful information on every page, which when combined with the vast number of illustrations and photographs, it's a valuable resource for both modelers and wargamers.



The book is broken down into 5 chapters and a section of appendices. The first couple of chapters look at the evolution and development of the tank, before moving onto looking at the various types of T-62 and foreign copies. The final chapter looks at the service and combat history of the tank, starting in 68 and the invasion of Czechoslovakia right up to it's use in the Syrian Civil War in 2011.

This is a great book for anyone with an interest in Cold War history and the military machines that operated during this period. It's also a good resource for modelers wanting reference material about the tank, and it's a great volume for war gamers wanting a better insight into the tank they may be fielding within their army. It's a nice read, informative with plenty of reference images, definitely a book to have on the shelf.

# The Lost Samurai

(Japanese Mercenaries in Southeast Asia 1593-1688)

*Author: Stephen Turnbull*

*Publisher: Frontline Books*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

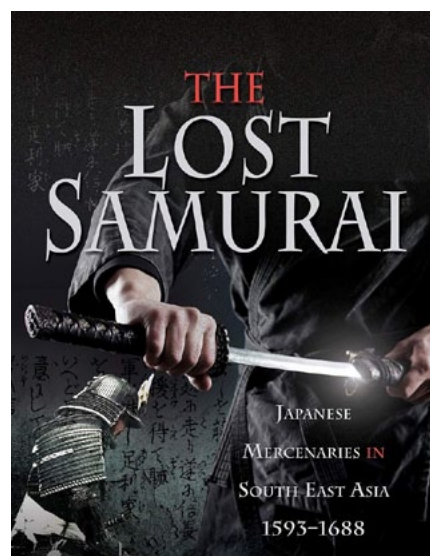
The Lost Samurai reveals the greatest untold story of Japan's legendary warrior class, which is that for almost a hundred years Japanese samurai were employed as mercenaries in the service of the kings of Siam, Cambodia, Burma, Spain and Portugal, as well as by the directors of the Dutch East India Company. The Japanese samurai were used in dramatic assault parties, as royal bodyguards, as staunch garrisons and as willing executioners. As a result, a stereotypical image of the fierce Japanese warrior developed that had a profound influence on the way they were regarded by their employers.

Whilst the Southeast Asian kings tended to employ samurai on a long-term basis as palace guards, their European employers usually hired them on a temporary basis for specific campaigns. Also, whereas the Southeast Asian monarchs tended to trust their well-established units of Japanese mercenaries, the Europeans, whilst admiring them, also feared them. In every European example a progressive shift in attitude may be discerned from initial enthusiasm to great suspicion that the Japanese might one day turn against them, as illustrated by the long-standing Spanish fear of an invasion of the Philippines by Japan accompanied by a local uprising.

It also suggested that if, during the 1630s, Japan had chosen engagement with Southeast Asia rather than isolation from it, the established presence of Japanese communities overseas may have had a profound influence on the subsequent development of international relations within the area, perhaps even seeing the early creation of an overseas Japanese empire that would have provided a rival to Great Britain. Instead, Japan closed its doors, leaving these fierce mercenaries stranded in distant countries never to return lost samurai indeed!

Samurai aren't normally associated with other parts of Asia with the exception of Korea, so this book was a fascinating read. The author is renown expert on the subject of Japanese history and the Samurai, so I was expecting a good read and I wasn't disappointed.

One aspect I found fascinating was the author suggests that is Japan hadn't closed itself off from the rest of Asia at



this time, they may well have been able to build an Empire throughout the region and eventually become a rival to Great Britain. This gives war gamers plenty of "What If" scenarios to game, the potential for a hypothetical alternative history campaign where the Samurai clans expand abroad or just being able to field a unit of Samurai in a force as elite forces.

I was surprised that they offered their services as mercenaries to foreign powers in the region including Europeans. Though these Samurai that did this probably aren't the typical Samurai we know from history, but those who are masterless, or pirates.

This book provides an interesting look at the Samurai from this period in Japanese history and gives a different perspective of what a Samurai warrior was. This book will definitely appeal both to historians interested in the Samurai, but also will be a great resource for those war gamers wanting to campaign outside of Japan and utilize Samurai warriors in their forces. It would also be a useful for those interested in a possible alternative history campaign where the warring clans expand over seas fighting for additional territory. I found the book quite an interesting read and would highly recommend anyone interested in the Samurai or Japanese history to pick up a copy.



# The Macedonian Phalanx

*Author: Richard Taylor*

*Publisher: Pen and Sword*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

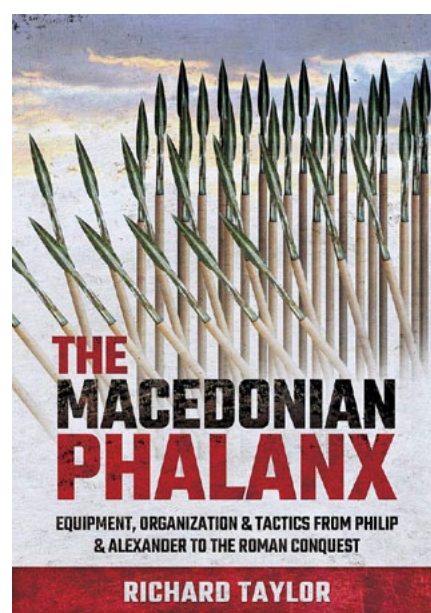
The Macedonian pike phalanx dominated the battlefields of Greece and the Near and Middle East for over two centuries. It was one of the most successful infantry formations of the ancient world, only rivalled by the manipular formation of the Roman legions. The phalanx was a key factor in the battlefield success of Alexander the Great and after his death dominated the armies of his Successors (the Diadochoi), who ruled from Greece and Egypt to the borders of India.

Richard Taylor gives an overview of the phalanx's development, organization, equipment and training. He analyses the reasons for its success, with an emphasis on case studies of the many battles in which it was used, from Philip II's reign to the Mithridatic Wars. He discusses whether the famous defeats by the Romans necessarily mean it was inherently inferior to the manipular legion tactics and considers what other factors were in play. The clear, accessible and well-researched text is supported by diagrams and battle maps, making this an outstanding study of this mighty formation.

This is a well-researched and written account of the Macedonian Phalanx. The author describes not only the formations utilised by soldiers in this period, but also the equipment used by them as well. He also provides an excellent insight into the Hellenistic military system during this period in history.

This isn't a quick read, it's nearly 500 pages of information, but it is a well-informed read on the subject matter. It's well known that the Phalanx in it's day pretty much rolled over everything it came up against until the Roman Legions. The author does a great job of explaining why and how this formation was so effective.

Once defeated by the Legions the pike wasn't seen again for several hundred years, when it made a resurgence during the Medieval period when the Swiss made use of them. The book has a section on Phalanx drilling, which illustrates that units had a level of professionalism.



This was unusual at the time, but for the phalanx to be effective then soldiers were required to train hard to perfect the formations and manoeuvring to make this weapon effective on the battlefield.

This is a great book for both historians and wargamers, it provides a great insight into the use of this formation. It explains its use on the battlefield in great detail which will be interesting to any wargamer who plays, ancients, pike and shot, medieval and fantasy war games.

I would definitely recommend this book, especially if you plan to build and play an Ancient Greek army. There is without doubt some useful information in this book that as a wargamer you're going to benefit from and find fascinating at the same time.

# Roman Britain's Missing Legion

## (What Really Happened to IX Hispania)

*Author: Simon Elliott*

*Publisher: Pen and Sword*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Legio IX Hispana had a long and active history, later founding York from where it guarded the northern frontiers in Britain. But the last evidence for its existence in Britain comes from AD 108. The mystery of their disappearance has inspired debate and imagination for decades. The most popular theory, immortalized in Rosemary Sutcliffe's novel *The Eagle of the Ninth*, is that the legion was sent to fight the Caledonians in Scotland and wiped out there.

But more recent archaeology (including evidence that London was burnt to the ground and dozens of decapitated heads) suggests a crisis, not on the border but in the heart of the province, previously thought to have been peaceful at this time. What if IX Hispana took part in a rebellion, leading to their punishment, disbandment and *damnatio memoriae* (official erasure from the records)? This proposed 'Hadrianic War' would then be the real context for Hadrian's 'visit' in 122 with a whole legion, VI Victrix, which replaced the 'vanished' IX as the garrison at York. Other theories are that it was lost on the Rhine or Danube, or in the East. Simon Elliott considers the evidence for these four theories, and other possibilities.

This Roman mystery has puzzled historians and archaeologists for years, many believe it was lost in Scotland fighting the Natives, yet there are other possible theories as to why the IX Hispania disappeared from the historical record.

The author explores several theories in an attempt to try and present which one was more plausible. The author takes each possible theory and closely examines them through the evidence available. He doesn't dismiss a theory out of hand but presents evidence as to why a theory might just be that a theory. The book provides an insight into the Roman military and the politics of the time, using information to show how the Ninth may have been annihilated and removed from history.



The book is a great and fascinating read, you may not agree with every think the author suggests but it is a page turner. It felt like I was reading a mystery novel at times, in that I couldn't wait to read the next section to discover a new insight. It was definitely an engaging read, and one I couldn't put down. It's well written and superbly researched.

I think this will defiantly appeal to military historians, those who love a good mystery and wargamers. Wargamers have the opportunity to possibly use some of the theories as a backdrop to a campaign. The book offers some interesting and intriguing ideas around the fate of the Ninth. I can't recommend this book enough, there's plenty inside for you to sink your teeth in and get the old brain matter working overtime.



# Opening the Fourth UK Esports Studio in Westfield, East London

Wanyoo, the cutting-edge esports studio holds a press conference of its new studio at Westfield Stratford. Social media influencers, journalists and esports enthusiasts are invited to visit the studio and participate in the tailor-made activities.

The press conference starts with a thorough introduction on Wanyoo's history and high-end gaming devices. Followed by the esports knowledge and experiences sharing from Ali Gaaloul, a League of Legends esports player. Onsite gaming lovers have great advices from him while testing out Wanyoo's top-level gaming tech.

Strictly complying with the COVID-19 rules, the press conference is divided into 4 sessions with only 6 VIPs in each one. Hand sanitiser, disposable headset covers, wet wipes and Covid-secure facilities are provided to ensure a safe environment.

Esports fans are also keen on the Wanyoo Opening Ceremony on 21st May, at which fans can pre-register to be the audiences for the tournaments of League of Legends, CSGO and Valorant from the 21 to the 23 May.



During the 3-day tournaments, Wanyoo is free of charge to every esports lover who comes to the studio..

Wanyoo's studios are designed not only creating a well-equipped space for gamers, but also seeking to cultivate a relaxing and entertaining atmosphere for people needing a break from their busy lives.

Continuing with its luxurious standard, Wanyoo's new studio in Westfield features an ergonomic and comfortable design for every gamer.

Each PC is equipped with PlayStation ports and high-tech level hardware equipment. The highest PC configuration is RTX 2080 Super.

Wanyoo's kit is impressive. Descend to its gaming floor and there's a glass-walled room of servers flickering away to itself, on-brand neon, rows and rows of high-end PC screens - each complete with almost frictionless mice, glowing keyboards



WE NEED YOU

irregular  
magazine

WE NEED YOUR HELP

COVER ARTISTS  
INTERIOR ARTISTS  
WRITERS

Contact Us  
[irregularmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:irregularmagazine@gmail.com)



[Irregularmag](#)



[facebook.com/irregularmagazine](https://facebook.com/irregularmagazine)



# irregular magazine

Next Issue out October 2021